Golden Spurs

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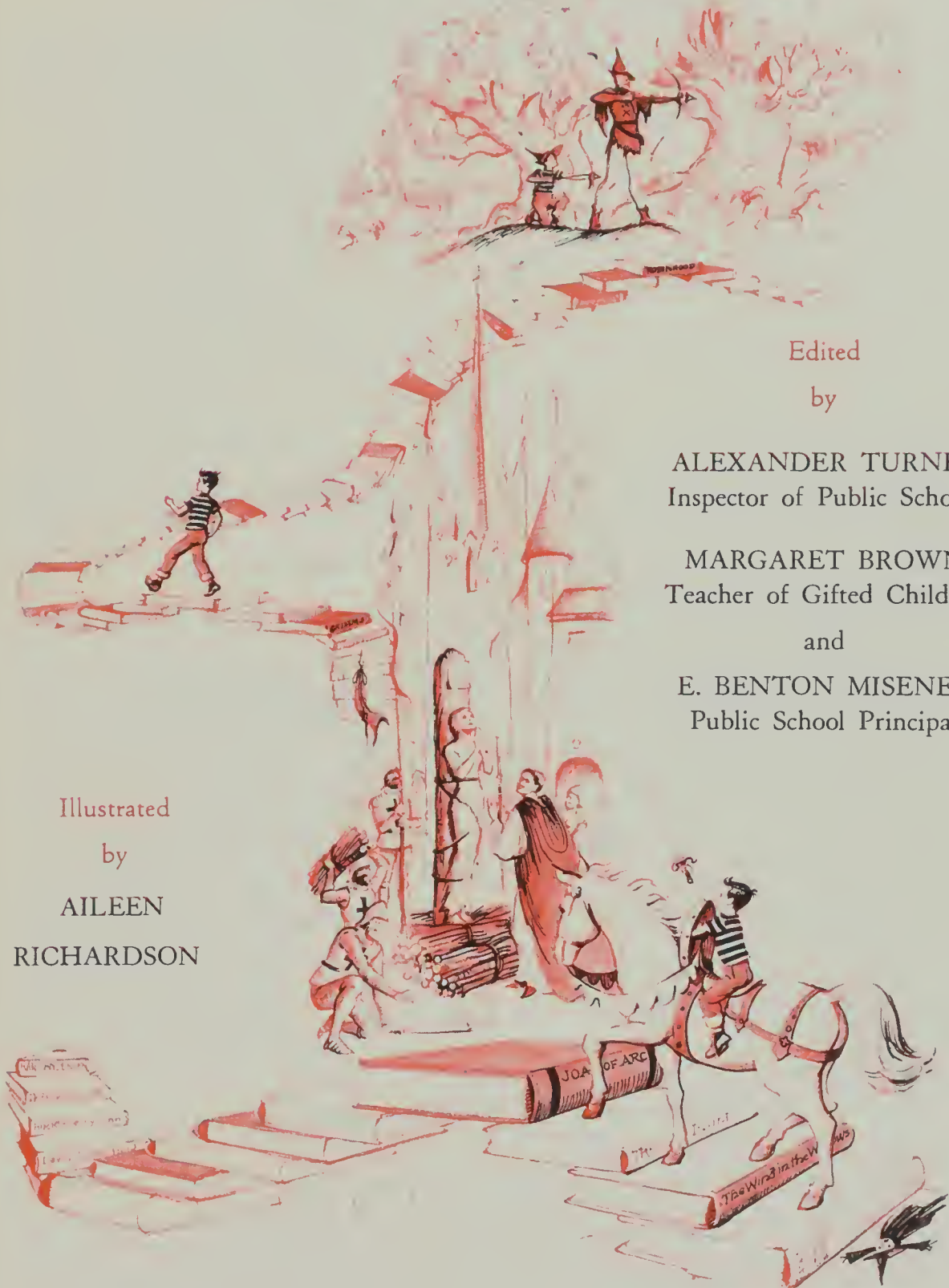
Edited
by

ALEXANDER TURNER
Inspector of Public Schools

MARGARET BROWN
Teacher of Gifted Children

and

E. BENTON MISENER
Public School Principal

Illustrated
by
AILEEN
RICHARDSON

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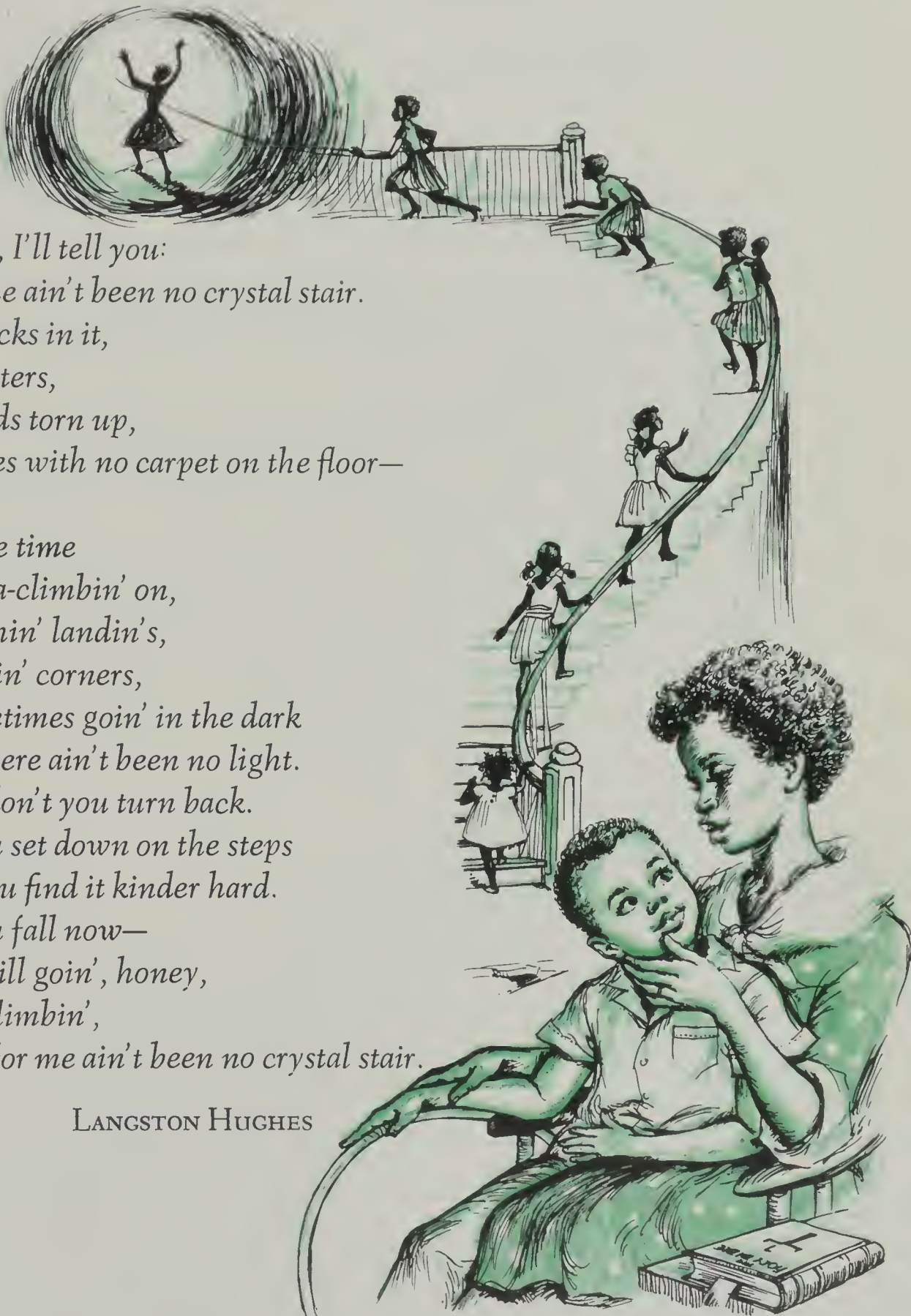
POEMS

THE BRIGHT RING OF WORDS

1

MOTHER TO SON

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So, boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you find it kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

LANGSTON HUGHES

Sashes Red And Blue

Near the beginning the LeBlancs lived around Quebec, because that is where the first LeBlanc settled with the gun and the cow and the wife given him by his King. But those early LeBlancs were a restless, daring tribe. Later some of them moved on to Montreal, then they went everywhere.

But the most restless and daring LeBlancs were those around Quebec and Montreal. The Quebec LeBlancs wore long red sashes because that was the colour for Quebec, and the Montreal LeBlancs wore long blue sashes because that was the colour for Montreal.

To be sure, the LeBlancs were so restless that in later times neither Quebec nor Montreal saw much of them. They were off in the woods working in the lumber camps. Or they were pushing up the river in great canoes looking for furs or fish or just looking for something new.

Sometimes blue-sashed LeBlancs met red-sashed LeBlancs, and then the contest was keen.

That's what happened up the Saguenay River when the lumber camp opened one winter. It was a bean for a pea because there were exactly as many Montreal LeBlancs as Quebec LeBlancs. Eight long blue sashes and eight long red sashes. Only the odds were one little bit against the red sashes because that unlucky Elphege LeBlanc was among them.

When there are blue sashes and red sashes so close together, there is bound to be one big fist-in-the-face after another.

All day the LeBlancs worked like sixteen beavers cutting down the trees. All night the LeBlancs quarrelled and fought like sixteen wolves with one dead rabbit.

"A blue sash makes the best woodsman," said Henri LeBlanc, shaking the ashes from his pipe. "A red sash would do better running a store in Quebec."

"Bah!" said Elphege LeBlanc. "A blue sash makes a better dancing partner than a woodsman."

All sixteen LeBlancs began quarrelling.

"We will let this decide itself," said old Paul LeBlanc. "A woodsman must be a good hunter. Sunday afternoon we will have one big moose hunt. That is, we will have two big moose hunts. The red-sashed LeBlancs will make one party and the blue-sashed LeBlancs will make the other. First party to get a moose is made of the best hunters. Do not feel too bad, red sashes. We will share our moose steaks with you."

So that Sunday afternoon the red sashes and the blue sashes got whatever they used for guns and went out into the woods. The blue-sashed LeBlancs went in one direction and the red-sashed LeBlancs went in the other. All of the Quebec LeBlancs had some kind of gun —all but Elphege. He carried the moose horn made of birch bark, because an unlucky man is better off with a horn instead of a gun. Besides, if Elphege was nothing else, he was a good moose caller.

The red sashes and their guns went this way and that way trying to find a moose to shoot.

"Mma! Mma! Mma!" bawled Elphege through his moose horn. Nothing answered but his echo.

For hours the brave hunters tramped through the woods looking for a moose.

At last Elphege and all his red-sashed troop were happy to hear an answer to his horn which was not an echo.

"Mma! Mma! Mma!" came the answer to the moose horn.

It came from the other side of a rocky hill. The men slowly crept up it with their guns ready.

Elphege blew his horn until his face was red so that the moose would not change its mind about meeting him.

"Mma! Mma! Mma!" came the answer. And over the rocky hill came not a moose but the blue-sashed Henri LeBlanc with a moose horn to his own lips.

The red sashes and the blue sashes were so unhappy that for a sheep's wooden collar they would have had a shooting battle. But they tried to make the best of the thing, in the way of good woodsmen.

"Henri is a lucky man," said the blue sashes. "He might so easily have been shot for a moose by those stupid red sashes."

But the red sashes said, "Poor Elphege! We might have known he would be unlucky enough to call another moose caller instead of a moose."

For luck is judged by the company it keeps.

"We will try a different contest," said Paul LeBlanc. "A woodsman must be a good tree cutter. You know that tall pine tree on the hill?"

All the LeBlancs nodded. Paul went on with his tongue.

"Tomorrow the red sashes will take the south side and the blue sashes will take the north. We will chop and chop until the tree falls. If it falls to the south, the red sashes have won because they

have cut the farthest and the fastest. But of course the blue sashes will win because the tree will fall to the north."

Next morning the Montreal LeBlancs and the Quebec LeBlancs trudged on their snowshoes to the tall pine tree on the hill.

The Montreal LeBlancs took quick turns chopping on the north side, and the Quebec LeBlancs took quick turns chopping on the south side. Even the unlucky Elphege had no trouble with his axe.

The strength and speed of the LeBlancs was so equally divided that even when their axes met in the middle, the tree still stood. It was too evenly balanced to fall either way.

But a little gray squirrel, awakened from his winter sleep by the axe blows, went racing up to his hole to look out. His hole was on the south side. The weight of the squirrel set the tree to shaking. Slowly the top began to lean over.

"We have won," cried a red sash. "Run for your lives!"

The red-sashed LeBlancs ran so fast that the tree missed everyone but that unlucky Elphege. The lace on his snowshoes came loose and tripped him up. A big branch knocked him to the ground and bruised his arms and broke his snowshoe in two.

"The squirrel cheated," cried Henri.

"It was unfair," shouted another blue sash. "Those Quebec LeBlancs must have put the squirrel inside the tree."

"Save your breath for the spring," said old Paul LeBlanc. "A woodsman must be good with a canoe paddle. When the river opens we will have a canoe race to the St. Lawrence. First canoe to reach it carries the best LeBlancs."

It did not take too long for spring to come because the LeBlancs were kept so busy all winter. Only unlucky Elphege did not work well because his arms were still stiff from the blow they had received from the falling tree.

The LeBlancs set out in two great birch canoes that spring; one full of red sashes and the other full of blue sashes.

"Away!" cried Elphege LeBlanc, the last one to step into his

canoe. But the canoe full of blue sashes was soon in the lead. Perhaps it was because of Elphege's stiff arms.

"This will never do," said Elphege. "Sooner than lose the race, we must go chasse galerie."

"What is that?" asked the LeBlanc in front of him.

"It is a trick I learned from Old Charlot, the devil," said Elphege. "One time I had the bad luck to run into him in the woods. He was getting into his canoe so he did not see me. But I heard what he said to make it fly through the air."

The other LeBlancs were shocked by this, but they were a strong daring lot so they agreed to go chasse galerie to the St. Lawrence River.

Elphege slowly said the words he had heard Old Charlot use.

"Ma ne mi ne ma ne mo," he cried. "Up we go with Old Charlot."

Pou-i-i-iche went the great canoe as it shot up into the air.

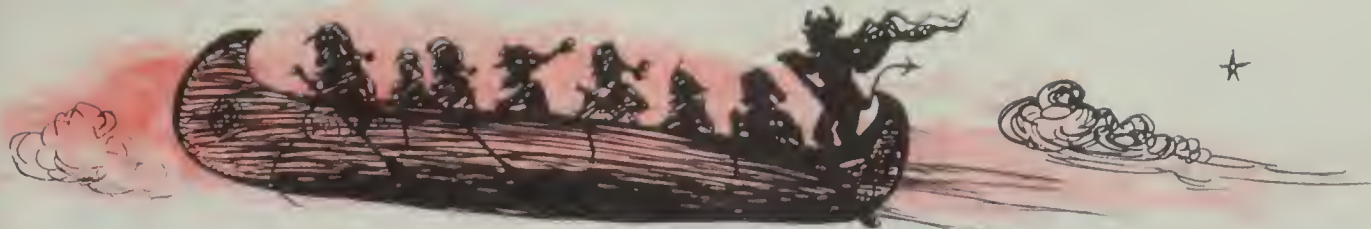
One LeBlanc grabbed the sides and another LeBlanc dropped his paddle. But Elphege, that unlucky one, was not quick enough to do anything because his arms were still stiff. He fell heels over head into the water. Ploc!

"Wait for me!" cried Elphege, splashing his stiff arms. "Wait for me!"

But already the great canoe was only a speck in the sky. At first the LeBlancs in the canoe did not know that Elphege had fallen out because his place in the stern was not empty. Then they saw that the boatman sitting there was not their cousin. Elphege did not have a hooked tail and horns growing out of his forehead. The man in the stern was no one but Old Charlot himself.

Old Charlot grinned at them wickedly.

"If it's a canoe ride you want, my sinners," he shouted, "I'll give you one that will never end."

The Quebec LeBlancs looked down and saw the canoe of the blue sashes far below. And the Montreal LeBlancs looked up and

thought they saw a wild goose flying the wrong way.

"If that honker doesn't come to earth before nightfall, he will bump into the moon," said one of the blue sashes. Then he paddled like mad so that the canoe of red sashes would not catch up with his own.

Old Charlot's canoe reached the St. Lawrence in no time. It flew on and on. Now the red sashes were paddling over Quebec. In no time, they were over Three Rivers. In less time, they were over Montreal. They went as far as Detroit and then became lost in the clouds.

If the people along the St. Lawrence saw the canoe, they would say, "The chasse galerie! It is those wicked men who went fishing on a Sunday."

People on the Detroit River sometimes saw the canoe on New Year's Eve. "The Canoe of the North," they would say. "In it are the souls of dead woodsmen returning for a last look at their homes and loved ones."

If a Frenchman fresh from France saw it, he would cry, "The chasse galerie! Look at the hunters riding their horses through the sky." Because those Frenchmen from France don't know a canoe from a horse. Wouldn't they be the fine ones to send into the Canadian woods!

But if the people along the Saguenay saw the canoe, they would cry, "The chasse galerie! Old Elphege LeBlanc has a crazy story about the ghost canoe. Poor, unlucky Elphege! He hasn't been the same since they fished him out of the river half drowned."

It has been many long years since anyone has seen the chasse galerie. My friends, Old Charlot's canoe must have caught itself in a cloud jam.

Jimmy Takes Vanishing Lessons

The school bus picked up Jimmy Crandall every morning at the side road that led up to his aunt's house, and every afternoon it dropped him there again. And so twice a day, on the bus, he passed the entrance to the mysterious road.

It wasn't much of a road any more. It was choked with weeds and blackberry bushes, and the woods on both sides pressed in so closely that the branches met overhead, and it was dark and gloomy even on bright days. The bus driver once pointed it out.

"Folks that go in there after dark," he said, "well, they usually don't ever come out again. There's a haunted house about a quarter of a mile down that road." He paused. "But you ought to know about that, Jimmy. It was your grandfather's house."

Jimmy knew about it, and he knew that it now belonged to his Aunt Mary. But Jimmy's aunt would never talk to him about the house. She said the stories about it were silly nonsense and there were no such things as ghosts. If all the villagers weren't a lot of superstitious idiots, she would be able to rent the house, and then she would have enough money to buy Jimmy some decent clothes and take him to the movies.

Jimmy thought it was all very well to say that there were no such things as ghosts, but how about the people who had tried to live there? Aunt Mary had rented the house three times, but every family had moved out within a week. They said the things that went on there were just too queer. So nobody would live in it any more.

Jimmy thought about the house a lot. If he could only prove that there wasn't a ghost. . . . And one Saturday when his aunt was in the village, Jimmy took the key to the haunted house from its hook on the kitchen door, and started out.

It had seemed like a fine idea when he had first thought of it—to find out for himself. Even in the silence and damp gloom of the old road it still seemed pretty good. "Nothing to be scared of," he told himself. "Ghosts aren't around in the daytime." But when he came out in the clearing and looked at those blank, dusty windows, he wasn't so sure.

"Oh, come on!" he told himself. And he squared his shoulders and waded through the long grass to the porch.

Then he stopped again. His feet did not seem to want to go up the steps. It took him nearly five minutes to persuade them to move. But when at last they did, they marched right up and across the porch to the front door, and Jimmy set his teeth hard and put the key in the keyhole. It turned with a squeak. He pushed the door open and went in.

That was probably the bravest thing that Jimmy had ever done. He was in a long dark hall with closed doors on both sides, and on the right the stairs went up. He had left the door open behind him, and the light from it showed him that, except for the hatrack and table and chairs, the hall was empty. And then as he stood there, listening to the bumping of his heart, gradually the light faded, the hall grew darker and darker—as if something huge had come up on the porch behind him and stood there, blocking the doorway. He swung round quickly, but there was nothing there.

He drew a deep breath. It must have been just a cloud passing across the sun. But then the door, all of itself, began to swing shut. And before he could stop it, it closed with a bang. And it was then, as he was pulling frantically at the handle to get out, that Jimmy saw the ghost.

It behaved just as you would expect a ghost to behave. It was a tall, dim, white figure, and it came gliding slowly down the stairs towards him. Jimmy gave a yell, yanked the door open, and tore down the steps.

He didn't stop until he was well down the road. Then he had to get his breath. He sat down on a log. "Boy!" he said. "I've seen a ghost! Golly, was that awful!" Then after a minute, he thought, "What was so awful about it? He was trying to scare me, like that smart aleck who was always jumping out from behind things. Pretty silly business for a grown-up ghost to be doing."

It always makes you mad when someone deliberately tries to scare you. And as Jimmy got over his fright, he began to get angry. And pretty soon he got up and started back. "I must get that key, anyway," he thought, for he had left it in the door.

This time he approached very quietly. He thought he'd just lock the door and go home. But as he tiptoed up the steps he saw it was still open; and as he reached out cautiously for the key, he heard a faint sound. He drew back and peeked around the door jamb, and there was the ghost.

The ghost was going back upstairs, but he wasn't gliding now, he was doing a sort of dance, and every other step he would bend double and shake with laughter. His thin cackle was the sound Jimmy had heard. Evidently he was enjoying the joke he had played. That made Jimmy madder than ever. He stuck his head farther around the door jamb and yelled "Boo!" at the top of his lungs. The ghost gave a thin shriek and leaped two feet in the air, then collapsed on the stairs.

As soon as Jimmy saw he could scare the ghost even worse than

the ghost could scare him, he wasn't afraid any more, and he came right into the hall. The ghost was hanging on to the banisters and panting. "Oh, my goodness!" he gasped. "Oh, my gracious! Boy, you can't do that to me!"

"I did it, didn't I?" said Jimmy. "Now we're even."

"Nothing of the kind," said the ghost crossly. "You seem pretty stupid, even for a boy. Ghosts are supposed to scare people. People aren't supposed to scare ghosts." He got up slowly and glided down and sat on the bottom step. "But look here, boy; this could be pretty serious for me if people got to know about it."

"You mean you don't want me to tell anybody about it?" Jimmy asked.

"Suppose we make a deal," the ghost said. "You keep still about this, and in return I'll—well, let's see; how would you like to know how to vanish?"

"Oh, that would be swell!" Jimmy exclaimed. "But—can you vanish?"

"Sure," said the ghost, and he did. All at once he just wasn't there. Jimmy was alone in the hall.

But his voice went right on. "It would be pretty handy, wouldn't it?" he said persuasively. "You could get into the movies free whenever you wanted to, and if your aunt called you to do something—when you were in the yard, say—well, she wouldn't be able to find you."

"I don't mind helping Aunt Mary," Jimmy said.

"H'm. High-minded, eh?" said the ghost. "Well, then—"

"I wish you'd please reappear," Jimmy interrupted. "It makes me feel funny to talk to somebody who isn't there."

"Sorry, I forgot," said the ghost, and there he was again, sitting on the bottom step. Jimmy could see the step dimly, right through him. "Good trick, eh? Well, if you don't like vanishing, maybe I could teach you to seep through keyholes. Like this." He floated over to the door and went right through the keyhole, the way water goes down the drain. Then he came back the same way.

"That's useful, too," he said. "Getting into locked rooms and so on. You can go anywhere the wind can."

"No," said Jimmy. "There's only one thing you can do to get me to promise not to tell about scaring you. Go live somewhere else. There's Miller's up the road. Nobody lives there any more."

"That old shack!" said the ghost, with a nasty laugh. "Doors and windows half off, roof leaky—no thanks! What do you think it's like in a storm, windows banging, rain dripping on you—I guess not! Peace and quiet, that's really what a ghost wants out of life."

"Well, I don't think it's very fair," Jimmy said, "for you to live in a house that doesn't belong to you and keep my aunt from renting it."

"Pooh!" said the ghost. "I'm not stopping her from renting it. I don't take up any room, and it's not my fault if people get scared and leave."

"It certainly is!" Jimmy said angrily. "You don't play fair and I'm not going to make any bargain with you. I'm going to tell everybody how I scared you."

"Oh, you mustn't do that!" The ghost seemed quite disturbed and he vanished and reappeared rapidly several times. "If that got out, every ghost in the country would be in terrible trouble."

So they argued about it. The ghost said if Jimmy wanted money he could learn to vanish; then he could join a circus and get a big salary. Jimmy said he didn't want to be in a circus; he wanted to go to college and learn to be a doctor. He was very firm. And the ghost began to cry. "But this is my home, boy," he said. "Thirty years I've lived here and no trouble to anybody, and now you want to throw me out in the cold world! And for what? A little money! That's pretty heartless." And he sobbed, trying to make Jimmy feel cruel.

Jimmy didn't feel cruel at all, for the ghost had certainly driven plenty of other people out into the cold world. But he didn't really think it would do much good for him to tell anybody that he had scared the ghost. Nobody would believe him, and how could he prove it? So after a minute he said, "Well, all right. You teach me to vanish and I won't tell." They settled it that way.

Jimmy didn't say anything to his aunt about what he'd done. But every Saturday he went to the haunted house for his vanishing lesson. It is really quite easy when you know how, and in a couple of weeks he could flicker, and in six weeks the ghost gave him an examination and he got a B plus, which is very good for a human. So he thanked the ghost and shook hands with him and said, "Well, goodbye now. You'll hear from me."

"What do you mean by that?" said the ghost suspiciously. But Jimmy just laughed and ran off home.

That night at supper Jimmy's aunt said, "Well, what have you been doing today?"

"I've been learning to vanish."

His aunt smiled and said, "That must be fun."

"Honestly," said Jimmy. "The ghost up at grandfather's taught me."

"I don't think that's very funny," said his aunt. "And will you please not—why, where are you?" she demanded, for he had vanished.

"Here, Aunt Mary," he said as he reappeared.

"Merciful heavens!" she exclaimed, and she pushed back her chair and rubbed her eyes hard. Then she looked at him again.

Well, it took a lot of explaining and he had to do it twice more before he could persuade her that he really could vanish. She was pretty upset. But at last she calmed down and they had a long talk. Jimmy kept his word and didn't tell her that he had scared the ghost, but he said he had a plan, and at last, though very reluctantly, she agreed to help him.

So the next day she went up to the old house and started to work. She opened the windows and swept and dusted and aired the bedding, and made as much noise as possible. This disturbed the ghost, and pretty soon he came floating into the room where she was sweeping. She was scared all right. She gave a yell and threw the broom at him. As the broom went right through him he came nearer, waving his arms and groaning. Aunt Mary shrank back.

And Jimmy, who had been standing there invisible all the time, suddenly appeared and jumped at the ghost with a "Boo!" And the ghost fell over in a dead faint.

As soon as Jimmy's aunt saw that, she wasn't frightened any more. She found some smelling salts and held them under the ghost's nose, and when he came to she tried to help him into a chair. Of course she couldn't help him much because her hands went right through him. But at last he sat up and said reproachfully to Jimmy, "You broke your word!"

"I promised not to tell about scaring you," said the boy, "but I didn't promise not to scare you again."

And his aunt said, "You really are a ghost, aren't you? I thought you were just stories people made up. Well, excuse me, but I must get on with my work." And she began sweeping and banging around with her broom harder than ever.

The ghost put his hands to his head. "All this noise," he said. "Couldn't you work more quietly, ma'am?"

"Whose house is this, anyway?" she demanded. "If you don't like it, why don't you move out?"

The ghost sneezed violently several times. "Excuse me," he said. "You're raising so much dust. Where's that boy?" he asked suddenly. For Jimmy had vanished again.

"I'm sure I don't know," she replied. "Probably getting ready to scare you again."

"You ought to have better control of him," said the ghost severely. "If he was my boy, I'd take a hairbrush to him."

"You have my permission," she said, and she reached right through the ghost and pulled the chair cushion out from under him and began banging the dust out of it. "What's more," she went on, as he got up and glided wearily to another chair, "Jimmy and I are going to sleep here nights from now on, and I don't think it would be very smart of you to try any tricks."

"Ha, ha," said the ghost nastily. "He who laughs last—"

"Ha, ha, yourself," said Jimmy's voice from close behind him. "And that's me, laughing last."

The ghost muttered and vanished.

Jimmy's aunt put cotton in her ears and slept that night in the best bedroom with the light lit. The ghost screamed for a while down in the cellar, but nothing happened, so he came upstairs. He thought he would appear to her as two glaring, fiery eyes, which was one of his best tricks, but first he wanted to be sure where Jimmy was. But he couldn't find him. He hunted all over the house, and though he was invisible himself, he got more and more nervous. He kept imagining that at any moment Jimmy might jump out at him from some dark corner and scare him into fits. Finally he got so jittery that he went back to the cellar and hid in the coal bin all night.

The following days were just as bad for the ghost. Several times he tried to scare Jimmy's aunt while she was working, but she didn't scare worth a cent, and twice Jimmy managed to sneak up on him and appear suddenly with a loud yell, frightening him dreadfully. He was, I suppose, rather timid even for a ghost. He began to look quite haggard. He had several long arguments with Jimmy's aunt, in which he wept and appealed to her sympathy, but she was firm. If he wanted to live there he would have to pay rent, just like anybody else. There was the abandoned Miller farm two miles up the road. Why didn't he move there?

When the house was all in apple-pie order, Jimmy's aunt went down to the village to see a Mr. and Mrs. Whistler, who were living at the hotel, because they couldn't find a house to move into. She told them about the old house, but they said, "No, thank you. We've heard about that house. It's haunted. I'll bet," they said, "you wouldn't dare spend a night there."

She told them that she had spent the last week there, but they evidently didn't believe her. So she said, "You know my nephew, Jimmy. He's twelve years old. I am so sure that the house is not haunted that, if you want to rent it, I will let Jimmy stay there with you every night until you are sure everything is all right."

"Ha!" said Mr. Whistler. "The boy won't do it. He's got more sense."

So they sent for Jimmy. "Why, I've spent the last week there," he said. "Sure. I'd just as soon."

But the Whistlers still refused.

So Jimmy's aunt went around and told a lot of the village people about their talk, and everybody made so much fun of the Whistlers for being afraid, when a twelve-year-old boy wasn't, that they were ashamed, and said they would rent it. So they moved in. Jimmy stayed there for a week, but he saw nothing of the ghost. And then one day one of the boys in his grade told him that somebody had seen a ghost up at the Miller farm. So Jimmy knew the ghost had taken his aunt's advice.

A day or two later he walked up to the Miller farm. There was no front door and he walked right in. There was some groaning and thumping upstairs, and then after a minute the ghost came floating down.

"Oh, it's you!" he said. "Goodness sakes, boy, can't you leave me in peace?"

Jimmy said he'd just come up to see how he was getting along.

"Getting along fine," said the ghost. "From my point of view it's a very desirable property. Peaceful. Quiet. Nobody playing silly tricks."

"Well," said Jimmy, "I won't bother you if you don't bother the Whistlers. But if you come back there—"

"Don't worry," said the ghost.

So with the rent money, Jimmy and his aunt had a much easier life. They went to the movies sometimes twice a week, and Jimmy had all new clothes, and on Thanksgiving, for the first time in his life, Jimmy had a turkey. Once a week he would go up to the Miller farm to see the ghost and they got to be very good friends. The ghost even came down to the Thanksgiving dinner, though of course he couldn't eat much. He seemed to enjoy the warmth of the house

and he was in very good humour. He taught Jimmy several more tricks. The best one was how to glare with fiery eyes, which was useful later on when Jimmy became a doctor and had to look down people's throats to see if their tonsils ought to come out. He was really a pretty good fellow as ghosts go, and Jimmy's aunt got quite fond of him herself. When the real winter weather began, she even used to worry about him a lot, because of course there was no heat in the Miller place and the doors and windows didn't amount to much and there was hardly any roof. The ghost tried to explain to her that heat and cold didn't bother ghosts at all.

"Maybe not," she said, "but just the same, it can't be very pleasant." And when he accepted their invitation for Christmas dinner she knitted some red woollen slippers, and he was so pleased that he broke down and cried. And that made Jimmy's aunt so happy, she broke down and cried.

Jimmy didn't cry, but he said, "Aunt Mary, don't you think it would be nice if the ghost came down and lived with us this winter?"

"I would feel very much better about him if he did," she said.

So he stayed with them that winter, and then he just stayed on, and it must have been a peaceful place for the last I heard he was still there.

Silver Buttons

Every day Ian McLeod and Don rode out from the fort to dig "prairie turnips" which grew everywhere on the plain and which the Indians had taught the newcomers to use for food.

There were still buffaloes around, but the men at the fort were not hunters and had little or no ammunition. The Nor'-Westers refused to sell them food, and the Indians had withdrawn to the forests and lakes where fish and game were more plentiful. Both disliked the settlers, because they thought farming would ruin the fur trade.

Sometimes a young Nor'-Wester with coal-black hair and a ready smile would ride up and speak to Ian and Don while they were digging turnips. The boys called him "The Black Knight".

He seemed to them just another boy. He asked eager questions about Scotland. Under his prompting Ian told him about the things he had loved: the shining sea, the blue lochs, the brooks like silver and the heather-clad hills. The Black Knight did not talk much himself, only asked questions and listened.

Once he said, "I was there for a while, long ago." He called Ian 'Silver Buttons' because of the silver buttons he wore on his jacket. Ian told him what his Granny had said to him when she gave him the buttons before he left Scotland. "These were your great-grandfather's, and he always kept them shining. He used to say they were like the honour of the McLeods, which must always be kept bright."

"I guess he thinks you're a chief, because of your silver buttons," jeered Don. "I hate digging those turnips. I want to be a hunter. If we only had a gun!"

One day as the Black Knight was leaving them, "Hey, Silver Buttons, how do you keep your buttons so shiny?" he asked.

"I polish them with wood ashes," said Ian with a smile.

"One of these days some Indian will spot them, and walk off with them," he warned.

Ian felt the colour drain from his face at the thought of losing his beloved buttons.

"Better let me take care of them," the Black Knight went on. "What do you want for them?"

"I couldn't part with them," Ian said quickly. "They used to belong to my great-grandfather. They're not for sale."

"Now, now, Silver Buttons, everything's for sale if the price is high enough. What would you say to a horse? You have only one between you. A horse for a few silver buttons is a fair trade."

"No thank you, sir." Ian covered his buttons with his hands as if he were afraid they might be spirited away.

The Black Knight wheeled his horse to ride off, but Don was blocking his path. "A gun, sir! Ian'd take a gun!" he shouted.

"You mean you'd take a gun," the Black Knight answered and kept on going.

"Do you think we could shoot a buffalo, Don, if we had a gun?" Ian asked in a slow halting voice.

"Of course we could," Don answered eagerly.

"It would be a godsend to have a whole buffalo," Ian said. He was thinking of how thin his father's hands were.

That night when Ian and Don came home, Ian's father was lying on his bunk in the cabin. "Just a slight cold," he explained to Ian.

But Ian knew a working man needed more than thin turnip broth to keep him on his feet. "We need a buffalo," he said simply.

"Yes, a buffalo would be the answer," his father knew.

Ian could not sleep that night.

The next day when they were out on the prairie digging turnips, Ian turned to Don and said, "I'm going to let the Black Knight have my silver buttons."

"For a gun?"

Ian nodded.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" cheered Don.

Ian felt a great anger. It was easy enough for Don to be pleased with the trade. But to him, parting with the silver buttons was such a price that he could hardly bear to think of it. They were his Granny's last gift to him. They had been worn by his grandfather and his great-grandfather. Somehow the silver buttons seemed a part of him and his past.

When the Black Knight appeared, the first thing Ian said was, "You can have my silver buttons for a gun."

The Black Knight whistled softly to himself, and hesitated before answering. "Does your father know about this offer?"

"They're my buttons," answered Ian, blinking his eyes rapidly as if the sun were too bright.

"Which means that he doesn't."

"We have to shoot a buffalo," Don said.

The Black Knight gave them a keen glance. "Yes, I guess you could do with a buffalo." Then to Ian, "I accept your offer."

The buttons jingled bravely as he dropped them into the Black Knight's outstretched hand.

"Thank you," the Black Knight said. "They'll look good on my new velvet waistcoat. Hope I can keep them as shiny as you do." He stroked the barrel of his gun lightly before he handed it to Ian. "And here's your gun, Silver Buttons. It's a good gun, and you'll find it useful."

Ian took it carefully.

"Do you know how to shoot?" the Black Knight was asking.

"Will you teach us?" Ian wanted to know.

"Yes," the Black Knight nodded.

The two boys listened to his instructions.

After the lesson, "Will you please load the gun with a charge big enough to kill a buffalo?" Ian asked.

The Black Knight did so, saying, "With a little more practice, you'll both be good hunters." He went on, "Always remember to come up on a buffalo from behind and shoot at the right side of the animal. Then the shot will go on the slant, and pierce the heart."

He was on his horse and ready to go, but turned back for a last word: "Also remember to handle a gun with respect, never carelessly." Then he was gone, taking with him Ian's silver buttons.

"Today I'm going to shoot a buffalo," said Ian in a determined tone.

"Let me go, Ian." Don stood holding the gun.

"I must go, I must shoot a buffalo," Ian repeated like a chant.

He mounted the horse. "I'm going now, Don. You'll have your chance later."

He urged the horse on, heading for the place where buffaloes had been seen a few days before. They were still there. As he came closer a buffalo wandered out of the reeds

"That's my buffalo," Ian said to himself, under his breath. The horse seemed to know just what was expected of him. He brought Ian around to the right side of the buffalo ready for the shot. But Ian was not ready. His hands were clammy and cold; the gun felt like a hunk of lead in his hands. "You must!" It was like a shout.

Ian knew it was only his own thoughts. The horse crept up close to the waiting buffalo, just at the right angle. Ian had both hands on the gun now. He raised it, aimed, and pulled the trigger.

There was a terrific blast, and a kick from the gun which knocked him off the horse. A sharp pain shot through his body as he hit the ground. He seemed to be sinking into a sea of red mist. Then gradually his senses came back. There was a throbbing pain in his arm and shoulder. He felt the ground shaking, and heard a pounding noise. He opened his eyes. The buffaloes were running across the prairie, their tails straight up, like little flags. He looked around. A short distance away lay a dark shape, all but hidden in the long grass. His buffalo! He had shot a buffalo!

Now the whole camp could eat. Tonight they would have a feast.

Robin And The Magic Stone

Slowly the green curtain of light moved and tumbled across the night sky. The northern lights flickered as they filled the heavens with dancing weaving patterns. Their strange radiance excited Robin, their beauty stirred her imagination.

"They look like ghostly searchlights," said Robin. "Do you think they are magic?"

"Gosh! Girls don't know anything," complained her brother Jim, as he kicked idly at a rock on the beach.

They were standing near the dock of their summer cottage on the last night of their holidays. It was as though nature was showing them one final treasure before they returned to the city. The whole sky shimmered and glittered with light.

"Now, Jim," said Father, laughing gently, "you mustn't expect Robin to know about such things. It wasn't too long ago that all men wondered about the northern lights. The Indians used to believe that they were caused by an evil spirit, who haunted the sky. All men in the tribe would hide from the strange lights, for if the evil spirit touched them with its queer light, they would become bewitched."

"But the Indians believed in all sorts of queer things," said Jim, "and we've found out that none of them were true."

"But stories don't have to be true before you believe in them. And sometimes even you can't explain some things with your silly old facts." Robin could sense that Father agreed with her and she wanted to make the most of it. "Tell us some more," she urged.

"Well, said Father, "there is a story they tell about the northern lights. They say it is an old legend told by the Eskimos, and goes back to the early times, before the white man came to the Arctic."

Jim and Robin both sighed, but for different reasons.

"Ikluk stood before the summer tent and longed for the long cold winter night. He hated the summer for then the great masses of ice and snow melted, leaving the dull brown earth. He sniffed the air for signs of frost and snow as he bent over the sled and began to fasten the new runner of walrus ivory he had just made. 'Poor useless Komatik', he thought, as he worked, 'we are both the same when summer comes. We are of the winter, the biting cold, the great winds, the driving snow. Soon, O sled, the ice shall return and you and I shall do a man's work.'

"Nearby the dogs began fighting again, for they too wanted to feel the strain of the harness and the excitement of the caribou hunt. At a word from Ikluk they were suddenly silent. It had always been this way, for Ikluk had some strange power over the creatures of the north. Some hidden magic in his glance gave him rule over them. At his word the wild heart was calmed, the savage became gentle and the timid became brave under his hand. Ikluk looked up happily for the first snowflake had fallen on his busy hand. 'Soon, soon, O Komatik, we shall hunt the great bear. Soon, soon, I shall try my magic against thee, O giant of the winter night. I must catch a fat fish for the shaman and ask him to arrange the taboos! Ai, Ai, Ajaja!' He sang as he hurried down to the river to catch his fish for he knew in his heart that this was the winter when he would see the great bear.

"That night the first blizzard of the winter howled down on the tiny village. Ikluk, listening to the swelling blast of the wind, seemed to hear within its beating roar the strange words of the shaman. How carefully he had arranged the fish's heart, the feathers from the eider duck, the pieces of fur and finally the claws of the white wolf. He had chanted the magic chant but it was his words that struck deep into the heart of Ikluk.

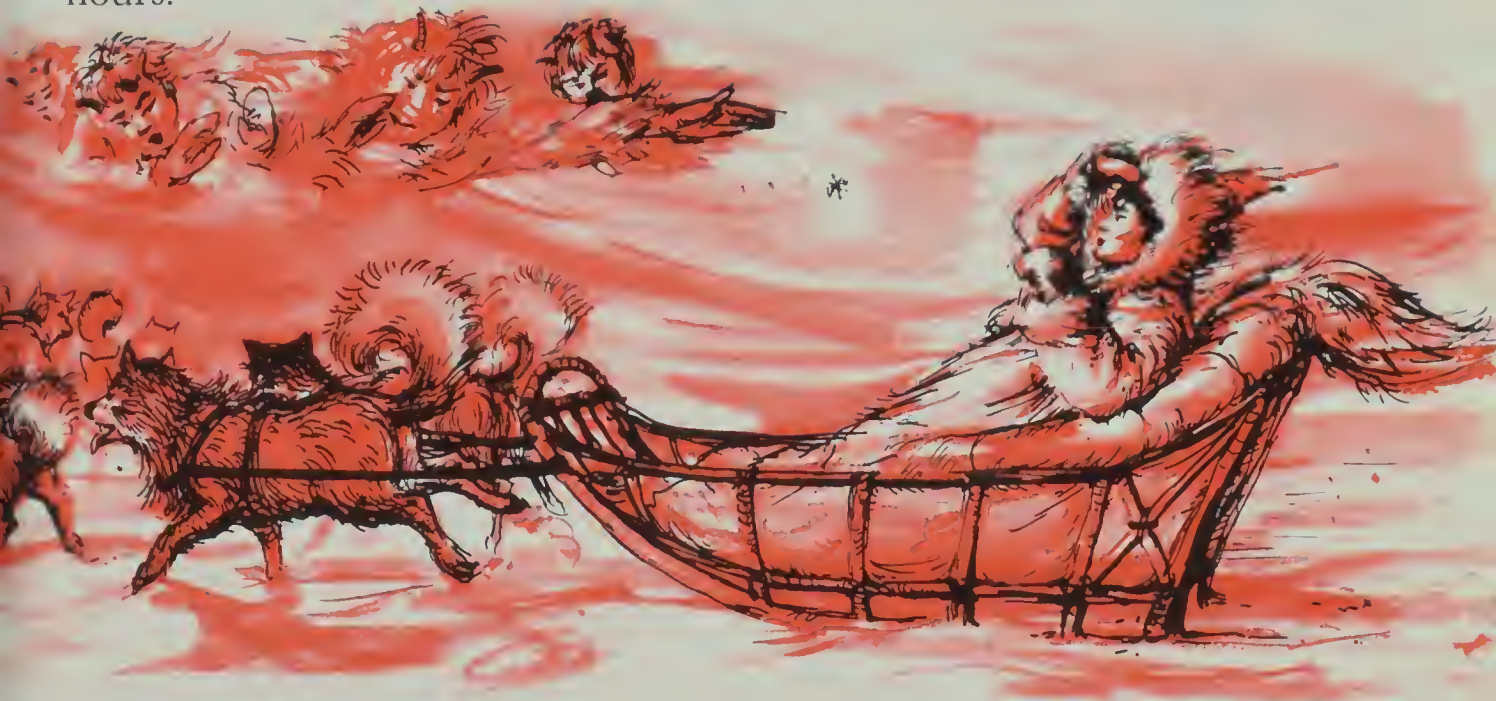
"O, Ikluk, I see and behold wonders and marvels for thee. Thou shalt be a great man to thy people. Thou shalt be a glory to the long winter night, but thy people shall never know thee for what thou art. Thou shalt come when the nights grow long and bite of winter is in the air. But thy coming and going shall be as the shadows on the igloo wall. Thy desire to possess the magic of the great bear, whom no man has ever seen, shall be a curse to thee."

In the morning, the shaman's words were almost forgotten in the bustle of breaking summer camp amid the swirling snow. But Ikluk noticed how his friends avoided him, how his words, when he spoke, echoed in the wind. Already the words of the shaman were setting him apart. The village knew his magic and they waited and watched, for now, Ikluk was with them, but not of them. He was marked with the power of his own magic and the village could see it. The village moved down river to where the great ice would form and the hunting for the seal would begin.

Soon the long winter night began and Ikluk, more and more, hunted by himself. His aim was sure, his sled was swift, his dogs were silent. Always he returned with his sled heavy with good meat for all. Deeper and deeper the words of the shaman burned, greater and greater grew Ikluk's power and strength. The village watched and waited. The shaman secretly gave Ikluk a broken bone from the leg of a wolf. Truly this was a mark of great magic.

Then Ikluk prepared. Carefully he iced the runners of his sled. He tested the harness of his dog team. He put new sinews in his harpoon and oiled his new leather rope. The night gave him a sign,

for the stars did not move in their place,and snow fell gently from a clear sky. He gave his carvings and best furs to the children of his friends. The villagers never saw him again.

The ice cracked and moaned, the night was filled with fury, the wind howled and roared. The villagers trembled. "Ai, Ai," they cried, "Ikluk belongs to the gods. They are taking his spirit from us. We are lost." But the shaman told them of a glory that Ikluk would bring to them and they would know it only when they saw it. And so they watched and waited through the long dreadful hours.

How long Ikluk struggled in the fierce night he did not know. He knew the gods were speaking to him for he could hear their voices in the wind. The driving snow beat against him, the numbing cold seized his breath, the ice heaved beneath him as he fought the power of gods. "Remain a mortal man," they pleaded. "Remember the words of the shaman. Do not seek eternal loneliness. Go back, go back," moaned the voices.

Suddenly, when he felt he must give up, the storm stopped. The abrupt silence caused Ikluk to look up, and there before him stood the great bear. On its hind legs it reared, high and powerful. Before he knew what he did, his hunter's instinct fired his harpoon.

Straight and true it flew from Ikluk's hand to the heart of the great bear. As soon as it was done, Ikluk knew the bitter taste of defeat, for he had struggled to test his magic against the gods, but had only behaved like a man after all. Into the quiet distress of the moment came the silvery voice of the Great Shaman of the Moon.

"O, foolish Ikluk! You have slain the god of the great bear, who henceforth must be the enemy of your people. He will hunt and be hunted. No more will the god of the great bear protect your people. But you, O Ikluk, you must live for eternity in the heavens where, lonely and lost, you will be immortal. You will mourn your wish to have great magic forever. Only when the nights grow long, the storms sweep down from the north,and the great ice cracks and growls in frozen anger,will you be seen by mortal man. Then they will fear you for they will not understand even though you shall have great beauty. Go Ikluk, I banish thee to the heavens." The voice faded and the wind murmured over the drifting snow. The Arctic night was empty, but suddenly the sky was filled with curtains of restless, shifting light. It fluttered and grew dim, it wavered and grew bright. And there to this day wanders the spirit of Ikluk, who knows neither what he is nor does.

The last of the northern lights had vanished from the sky, long before Father had finished speaking. The waves of the lake gurgled and murmured gently against the rocky beach. All was quiet as a feather dropping into water.

"Oh, look!" cried Robin. She pointed excitedly to the silver streak that flashed across the sky. "The Shaman of the Moon must have sent us a message. He is sending a star to visit us."

"O, my gosh! Fairy stories and rubbish!" grumbled Jim, "She doesn't even know that was a meteor. Do you always believe everything? Don't you know anything? A shaman doesn't know as much as I do." Jim was disgusted.

"Well, I know that the Shaman of the Eskimos and the Manitou of the Indians had powerful magic. The Shaman of the Moon must have been sending us a message about Ikluk," Robin replied in her most superior tone.

"Aw, you read too many fairy stories," declared Jim scornfully.

"Well, Jim, I told an Eskimo myth. Suppose you tell us the facts about a meteor," said Father.

Pleased at the chance to show off his knowledge of science, Jim began importantly. "A meteor is a small piece of rock or metal travelling through space. When it meets the air around the earth it can be seen because it leaves a fiery trail of light. When the meteor hits the air it is travelling so fast that it just burns up. That's what makes the light. It's just like striking a match. Mostly meteors are very small and burn up completely before they reach the earth."

A dozen questions crowded into Robin's mind. She was confused and didn't know whether to ask about the northern lights, Ikluk, the great white bear, the shaman, or the falling star. She chose the last.

"What happens if the meteor doesn't burn up and some of it hits the earth?" She hoped that Jim couldn't answer this one.

"Then it becomes a meteorite and what doesn't burn just looks like any other dark stone. Usually it has a lot of tiny scratches on its

surface." Jim went on, interested now that Robin seemed to want to know the facts.

"Just suppose I found one, would it come from the shaman?"

Before Jim could explode, Father hurried the children into the cottage, for the argument between Robin's imagination and Jim's facts could be endless. But Robin had the last word, even though Jim couldn't hear it. As she looked out into the velvet night from her bedroom window, her wish floated up to the silent, timeless stars. "Poor Ikluk. I wish he knew how splendid his shining beauty is. I don't care about Jim and his facts about the northern lights. I just know that the shaman will send me a fallen star. Then I'll know that Ikluk is no longer sad and lonely in the northern sky. His magic is ours and we all believe in his magic. Tomorrow I'll find a fallen star, and it will be magic when I touch it. I just *know* the shaman will send me a sign."

She sighed happily, for she knew in her heart that her wish would come true.

"Robin! That's the third time I've spoken to you!" Robin started as her Mother's voice cut sharply across her thoughts. "You're dreaming again. I want you to help me but it looks as though you're too far away."

"I was just wishing, Mother."

"You're wishing and dreaming will never make you a magician," jeered Jim, happy in his fortunate choice of words.

"Now children, I want you to pack your things right after breakfast, and then help Father pack the car. This has been such a pleasant holiday, I'm sorry we have to go back to the city." Even as she spoke, Mother was aware that Robin hadn't heard the last part of what she had said. Robin and Jim were so different. Jim's practical thirst for knowledge about science was such a contrast to Robin's imagination. She sighed as she thought back to her own childhood dreams, and touched Robin's head lightly in sudden sympathy and understanding.

Without really knowing what guided her footsteps, Robin wandered down to the beach after her clothes were packed. The sun tipped the waves with gold as they chuckled over the pebbly beach. The trees whispered their leafy song as idly Robin threw pebbles into the water. It was as though she were in a hall of yellow light that murmured with delicate liquid sounds. The pebbles became arcs of dazzling brightness that fell glittering from her hand. Suddenly her arm tingled. Something strange was happening. As quickly as Robin had left the tiny beach she returned to find herself holding a black stone.

A voice, gentle and silver, had touched her mind. "O know that Ikluk's spirit is at peace in the long stillness of the Arctic sky. Long since has he been forgiven. He understands the great bear. Each autumn his coming brings joy to his people for his spirit shines as beauty of the heavens for all who will see. I, the Shaman of the Moon have sent you a sign that this is so." The voice faded and where she had been Robin couldn't know. Except that in her hand she clutched a black stone. She trembled and dropped it, only to feel the same tingling sensation as she picked it up again. Why, it was queer and black. It was strangely smooth and yet it just fitted into the very shape of her hand. It was heavy; its surface covered with tiny scratches. It couldn't be, but it must be, for hadn't she heard the voice of the shaman. It was a message from the stars. Her heart thumping wildly, Robin rubbed the fingers of her other hand over the stone. Now they would just have to believe.

Quickly she ran back to the cottage.

"It came! I knew it would!" she cried. "It's a message."

"My goodness, child, what came? I wish you wouldn't burst in like that, Robin. Whatever are you talking about?" asked Mother. Jim, who had just lifted a box to take out to the car, set it down quickly and stared.

"Why the message came from the Shaman of the Moon."

At Mother's puzzled look, Robin realized that she knew nothing

of Ikluk and Father's story. Hurriedly she explained and told about her wish.

"And here's the message from the shaman—a fallen star." She held the stone aloft.

"Huh! You don't expect me to believe that," hooted Jim.

"Well, come and see for yourself. It's exactly what you said a fallen star should be."

Jim's eyes gaped, as he took the stone and examined it with an air of complete disbelief.

"Snakes and jellyfish! It's the real thing! Robin do you know what this is?" Jim spluttered. "Why, it's a meteorite—a real meteorite—and you found it. Just like you said you would. Why, that's just great!" The meaning of his own words took hold of Jim and he looked at Robin with new respect. "You did say that you'd find one," he repeated.

"Yes, I did," replied Robin and reached for her stone.

"Say, Robin," Jim began, "I'd give anything to have a fallen star for my science collection. One that my sister had found—just think of the story I can tell about it. And it'll be true too—even though it has some magic in it."

Mother watched with interest at the sudden change in Jim's thinking.

"Say, Robin, will you give it to me for my collection?"

Now, what did Robin do? Did she or not give her fallen star to Jim?

Boy On Strike

Dave Gilder and his two older brothers were working with their father in the new corn down by the creek. Without any warning David threw down his hoe. "I've had enough of this! I quit!" he cried.

"You don't have to keep with me if it's too hard," his father said quietly.

"I just quit!" David said, trying to sound older than his ten years. "Why should I have to work all the time anyhow? Is this my farm?"

His father scratched his nose.

His two brothers wanted action. "Make him work, Dad," they said. "He's strong."

"Work!" David cried. "That's all we ever do around this place! Why should we have to work all the time?"

"Maybe it's because we've got to eat all the time," his father told him mildly. "Now stop this foolishness and pick up that hoe," he ordered.

"No!" David said firmly. "Even if you whip me, I've made up my mind! Working like this is unfair!"

"The lad must be letting all those books he was reading lately about child laboür go to his head," his father thought. "Better get to the house then," he said. "I'll see you later."

At noon when the others went up to the house for lunch, David was sitting in the big armchair on the front porch with a book, looking as angry as ever.

As usual whenever there was a problem, Calvin, the hired man, was ready with advice. "Only one cure when a child disobeys," he said. "Don't spare the rod."

"I'll tend to him right after dinner," David's father declared. But after dinner he was in no hurry to get around to the punishment, not even when Uncle Bert came into the lane to borrow the tractor.

"What are you going to do to him?" Uncle Bert asked in a low tone.

David must have been around the corner of the porch listening, for it was he who gave the answer. "He'll whip me! He won't even think of listening to my side of it!"

After David had hurried off across the yard, Uncle Bert said, "Couldn't you work it somehow to give him a trial?"

So that's how the idea of a trial was born. David's father would be judge, then after a lot of argument it was decided that David could have his Uncle Bert to defend him. It got a lot of publicity, that trial.

Back at the cornfield Calvin began to give David's father another lecture. "It's an awful thing, you letting the boy get away with this," he began. "It's just like . . ."

David's father cut him off. "Can't listen to you now, Calvin. It wouldn't be right. I'm to be judge of this trial, and I must not decide ahead of time. Tell you what, though—the court hasn't a lawyer yet. Suppose I just give you that job right now; then when it comes to the trial tonight, you can say all you want to say. Better warn you right now though; Uncle Bert is pretty sharp. Maybe too sharp for fellows like you and me."

"I'll take the job!" Calvin declared angrily.

The trial was held out at the front of the house.

David's father, as judge, read the charge. "Accused, David Gilder, is charged with refusing to work. What have you to say for yourself, David?"

David stood up. "I don't think it's right for us boys to work so long and so hard that we never have any time for fun. Can't even sit down to read a book any more without somebody hollering at us to get busy somewhere. Well, I just decided that it was time for me to stick up for my rights."

"All this work you're talking about, whose work is it?" Calvin asked.

"The hired man's mostly," replied David quickly. "Things he never gets around to."

"I object!" Calvin said, getting dark in the neck. "I insist that the accused must not be saucy. I submit, your honour," Calvin's voice had an edge to it, "that as long as you are his father it's only right that any work you tell him to do is his work. And he's got nothing to say about it."

"He's saying it anyhow," Uncle Bert cut in. "Doing all right at it, too."

"I object," Calvin said. "It isn't his turn yet."

"You're right," ruled David's father as judge. "Hold your peace, Uncle."

"I stand corrected, your honour."

Calvin gathered himself together for a final effort. "I must say,

your honour, that this lad won't obey. It isn't his right to question what he's told."

Uncle Bert as lawyer for the defence got to his feet. "I just have this to say," he spoke slowly. "Just take a little time off to show David that work is a blessing. Find a way to show him that life without work would be as empty and lonely, as useless as a bottle floating on the ocean."

So it was up to David's father then, and he thought it over as carefully as he could while everybody waited. It was what Uncle Bert had said which did most to help him decide the sentence.

"I've listened to all of you," he said. "And I agree with Calvin that David has been disobedient." He turned to David then. "Stand up and take your sentence," he told him, and when David was on his feet, "I hereby tell you that for three full weeks from this night you aren't to do one scrap of work around the place." He paused before adding, "And if I catch you doing it, I'll give you the whipping you nearly got today at noon. Court dismissed."

David was confused by this, but soon recovered. He put on airs and acted as though there was some great battle between his father and himself. He read one book after another until there was not one on the shelves with any dust left on it.

His father would not let him pick blueberries with the others even though David said it was not work. When his father found him helping the neighbourhood boys make a baseball diamond, he reminded him that this was work. Again David talked back.

Then one day the rain blew in out of the east in such a hurry that no one realized soon enough just how serious it was. And then they remembered that the little chicks and baby turkeys were out. David was eager to help bring them in, but once more his father pointed out that under the terms of his sentence he must not do one scrap of work around the place. So David had to watch the others run off without him. They got the chickens in in time, but the baby turkeys were harder to catch. At least ten of them died that

night in front of the kitchen stove, and as David sat watching them he began to cry.

"Why wouldn't you let me help you?" he said. "I could have caught those ten turkeys!"

His father did not say a word.

"This is crazy!" David screamed heading for the stairs.

But the next day he began to wear a smart look again. He no longer asked whether he could help with any of the chores. He spent little time around the house in the daytime. He came in for his meals but went out, as soon as he had eaten, in the direction of the store.

A few days later his father went down to the store to see what was going on.

"He's down in my basement reading books," Lem Martin, the storekeeper said. "Come on down."

When they opened the cellar door a little bell rang. They found David curled up in an old chair beside a stack of books. They went upstairs again and out front.

David's father started up the road toward home, but Lem followed him. "I suppose that according to the best law," Lem said, "you couldn't whip that lad for working unless you could find a witness who swears to seeing him in the act, could you now?"

"So he has been working," David's father nodded.

Lem held up his hand. "Mind you now, I couldn't swear to it because I've never seen him at it."

"Good worker?" David's father wanted to know.

"Best worker I ever saw in my whole life," the storekeeper said. "Never stops except when the little bell rings. It's those ten turkeys he's trying to make up to you, and it's ten turkeys I'm paying him when he's done. . . . Now you couldn't whip a kid like that, could you?"

David's father was facing into the sunset. Maybe the light was too strong for his eyes. Anyway he had to rub them. "No," he said. "I guess I couldn't. Send him home soon, will you?"

Cabin In The Clearing

John hated the cabin in the clearing. He had hated it right from the first, from even before there was a cabin. He could remember the day that the creaking wagon had stopped in the wide place in the trail. He had helped his father unload the boxes, the bedding, mother's pots, the long rifle and the axe. They had stood there when the wagon had moved off. His sister had climbed to the top of the pile of bedding and looked around her with eyes like an owl. Mother just stood there, hands folded in front of her and watched his father. His father stood legs far apart, head thrown back looking at the huge trees and smiling a little smile.

"Well, Mary, we are here at last. Our own land! If we can clear it and build a cabin and stay on it for two years!"

John could not understand why his father was so happy. There was nothing here but trees, huge trees; trees so big that their branches

shut out the sky and made everything dark and frightening. They seemed to close in around John and he wanted to cry out.

Why did they have to come here? Why could they not have stayed back in York where they had spent the last wonderful year? He could see York in his mind right now. It had wide streets which were always full of interesting things to see and do. Every day wagons and carts creaked up and down the streets pulled by the slow-moving bullocks. Soldiers in the militia walked up and down in their red or green uniforms. Now and then an officer would gallop by, his gold shoulderstraps gleaming in the sun,and his sword rattling against his saddle. There were always the Indians to watch as they sat at the corner in front of the stores. John was a little afraid of them. They never talked or smiled but he felt that their sharp eyes missed nothing that went on around them. He had heard the grown-ups talk of "scalps" often enough and he couldn't walk past even the old woman who sold fish without a little shiver going up and down his spine.

John had never liked school, but now that he knew that he could not go to school out here in the woods he missed it. He couldn't see his friends again, especially James. He and James were

always together. They went to school together and came home together. Every Saturday they would slip away from chores to wander down to the foot of Bay Street and watch the lake schooners come in. It was good down at the waterfront. You could see all the ships lined up at the wharves, their tall masts like a forest without any branches. The smell was good too. Always tar and oakum and fresh wood as the carpenters made small repairs or built a skiff.

John's thoughts came back to the present when he felt his father's hand on his shoulder and heard his father say, "No wool-gathering here, lad. There is too much to do. We have to get a fire going for mother and I'll have to get us some sort of shelter for the night."

While John gathered the small twigs and strips of dry birch bark to get the fire going, he listened to the sound of his father's axe deep in the woods behind him.

Presently, his mother had the old black pot on the little blaze and the smell of cornmeal cooking came to him and reminded him that it had been a long time since breakfast.

Cautiously he poked at the cornmeal for it was new to him.

"What is this stuff, Mother?" he asked.

"Don't go turning up your nose at that, John," said his mother, "you will eat a lot of that before your next birthday. Food will be scarce with us for a while until your father can get the trees cut and a crop into the ground."

It wasn't bad, John decided, after his first mouthful, but it was nothing like the food his mother had prepared when they were back in York, and once more his thoughts went back to the village in which he had been so happy.

As the days went by, York began to seem like a dream. Every morning his father roused him out of his rough bed in the lean-to and set him to work with the hand axe lopping off the branches of the big trees he had cut down. Every night he stumbled back to the lean-to at dark aching all over and too tired to eat his cornmeal mush.

Gradually the sky appeared at the top of the little clearing his father had made by cutting down the trees. Finally the day came when the logs he had so carefully trimmed of branches were rolled by his father into the centre of the clearing and laid one on top of the other to make the walls of the cabin. John loved to watch his father notch the ends of the white logs so that they would hold tight and firm.

Once, just before he fell asleep, he heard his mother say to his father, "Don't you think this is too hard for a ten year old?" And he heard his father say, "Nonsense, Mary, look at the lad."

When the cabin was finished it looked so clean and new standing there in the wide clearing with its smooth peeled log walls and the sweet smelling cedar shingles that John's father couldn't help showing the pride he felt.

Laughing, he swung John's mother around the big empty room which echoed to their noise. John's father stopped at last and turned to face his son who had been standing silently through all the celebration.

"What's the matter, son. Don't you like our new cabin?"

"It's all right, I guess," John answered.

"Lad, you have done a good job these last three weeks. Neither your mother nor I could have done it without your help. We know that you miss York and your friends. How would you like to have James come out here for a few days?"

"O Dad, could I?"

"I think we could arrange it. The man who drove the wagon goes by here tomorrow and he could bring James out on his next trip. We will send a letter with him to James' people and I think they will agree."

John took the letter up to the road the next day and the teamster promised to deliver it and bring back the passenger. John could hardly wait for the next few days to pass. The day the teamster

was due to return he sat by the trail for hours waiting for James. He could hardly wait to find out about York and all the things he had missed.

When James finally arrived he was too full of stories of his travel to mention York. He stared at his friend John with amazement.

"John," he said, "you are so big. Much bigger than I am now and brown. You are strong, too. I thought you would squeeze me to death when you grabbed me off the wagon. And to think I was the one that always beat you at wrestling."

John was surprised at his friend saying this. He didn't appear different to himself. It must be all the hard work he had been doing.

That day was full of surprises for John. Instead of talking of York, James could do nothing but talk of the cabin. How nice it was and so many wonderful things to do!

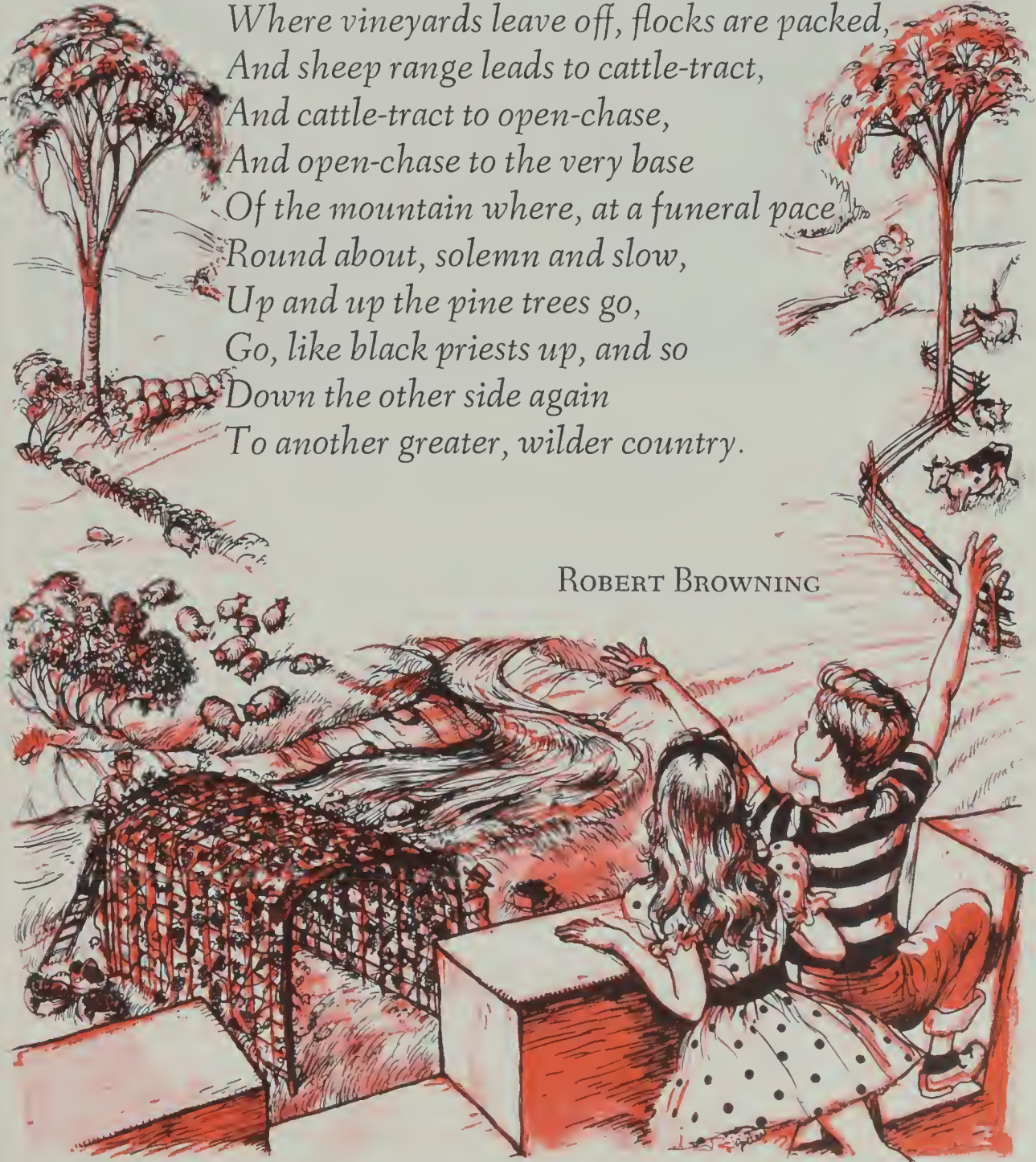
When they went to bed that night up in the loft over the main room of the cabin, John was so filled with amazement that he could hardly go to sleep. All the time he had been feeling sorry for himself, away out here in the woods having to do all the hard work, eating cornmeal, and all the rest while the boys in York were having all the adventures. And now here was James telling him how lucky he was having all this marvelous adventure while James had to stay in York where nothing exciting ever happened.

When John came down to breakfast the next morning, he was looking at the world with new eyes. This fine strong cabin in the wilderness was a good place to be. It was snug and weather-tight and he had helped to build it. He looked at his father with pride and his mother with love. They were wonderful people to do this when they might have stayed in town. Suddenly he didn't feel hatred toward the trees or the cabin or anything on this whole wide earth.

He swept James into a real bear hug. "Come on, lad, we're going fishing!"

THE NORTH COUNTRY

Ours is a great, wild country;
If you climb to our castle's top,
I don't see where your eye can stop;
For when you've passed the cornfield country,
Where vineyards leave off, flocks are packed,
And sheep range leads to cattle-tract,
And cattle-tract to open-chase,
And open-chase to the very base
Of the mountain where, at a funeral pace
Round about, solemn and slow,
Up and up the pine trees go,
Go, like black priests up, and so
Down the other side again
To another greater, wilder country.

Robert Browning

How Rabbit Lost His Tail

A long, long time ago when Canada was very new, Glooskap made the animals.

"Talk as man talks," he said, "and be kind and helpful to him always."

The animals filled the woods and spoke to man and helped him. They were all kind. They were all beautiful. But the kindest and most beautiful was Rabbit.

Now Rabbit did not look then as he looks now. He had a long thick bushy tail. He had a round, fat body. His legs were short and straight. Best of all, he was polite and gentle.

Glooskap was pleased with Rabbit and he said, "I shall make you my Forest Guide. Go now into all the trails and learn them. When you meet men who have lost their way, guide them through the woods until they come to their path again."

Rabbit was happy to be Forest Guide for Glooskap. Day by day he ran along the trails until one day he was able to sit on an old fallen log and say, "I know all the paths."

At that very moment an Indian walked slowly along the trail and stopped in front of Rabbit. He was tired and his shoulders were bent with sadness. Rabbit, always kind, asked, "Why are you so sad, friend?"

The Indian raised his tired head and told Rabbit his sad tale.

"I am on my way to marry a beautiful girl who lives a long way from here. I have lost my way. If I do not find it soon I am afraid I will arrive there too late and she will marry someone else."

Rabbit jumped to his feet and said, "Do not worry, my friend, I know the way and I will lead you there in time."

Now Rabbit was so happy because he could help the Indian that he ran quickly along the trail. The poor Indian was soon left far behind. He was so tired that he did not look where he was going and fell into a huge hole. The hole was so deep that he could not get out. So the Indian sat down and cried.

Rabbit, hearing his cries, came running back along the trail. When he found the Indian in the hole he said, "Don't make such a fuss. I will lower my tail into the hole. You may then hold on to it and I will pull you up."

Rabbit put his tail down into the hole and the Indian held it firmly. With a great effort Rabbit began to pull the man up. Alas! the man was too heavy. The tail broke and Rabbit was left with just a little stump of a tail.

"Do not worry," Rabbit called cheerfully. "I will put my strong hind legs down into the hole. Hold on to them and I will pull you up."

The man did as he was told and Rabbit slowly pulled him out of the hole. But when Rabbit tried to walk along the trail he found that something strange had happened to his hind legs. While he was pulling the Indian out of the hole they had stretched. Now they were twice as long as they should be. Poor Rabbit could not walk or run as he used to. He must hop along.

Rabbit had no time to worry about his hind legs and his tail now for he must hurry the Indian along the path to his bride.

Rabbit and the Indian arrived at the village just in time. After the wedding the beautiful bride invited Rabbit to dance. As they danced around and around the village fire a large piece at the bottom of the bride's dress came loose and finally fell off.

Rabbit, always kind, said that he would sew it back on. He held one end of the thread in his mouth while he sewed so that it would not slip through. Some of the other dancers, not looking where they were going, bumped into Rabbit. The thread cut his upper lip almost to his nose.

The bride felt very badly that Rabbit was hurt. She went into her tent and came out with a beautiful white fur coat. "Take this," she said, "and wear it only in winter. Your enemies will not be able to see you against the snow. Wear your own coat of brown in the summer time and none can see you against the colour of the woods."

The Indian and his bride thanked Rabbit for all his kindness to them. Poor Rabbit hopped sadly away. Gone was his lovely bushy tail. No longer could he run but only hop. His poor lip was split almost to his nose.

When Rabbit met the other animals some of them were very rude to him. They made fun of his changed look. But Rabbit was not only kind and gentle, he was also clever.

"Do you think I look strange now?" he asked. "Let me tell you that in the country in which I have been visiting everyone looks like I do. They think it very silly to have long bushy tails. A short tail is neat and tidy and never gets in the way. As for short legs that run,

they would much rather have long legs that hop. I had my lip split because everyone in that country has one and they like it."

When Rabbit said this all the other animals fell silent. They thought that Rabbit could not be so strange if all these people looked like that too. But in spite of his brave talk, Rabbit was very unhappy about the way he looked. From that day on Rabbit never spoke another word to man, and whenever he saw man coming he would hop away as fast he could. In winter he would wear his white coat and in summer his brown. His little stump of a tail would wag and his poor little split lip would twitch whenever man came near.

And from that day to this all Rabbits have behaved just like Rabbit the Forest Guide.

Little Chief of the Gaspé

Very carefully, so as not to make any noise, eleven-year-old Jacques reached up to a small shelf above his bed and took down a model canoe. In the canoe sat an Indian. "Good morning, Chief," whispered Jacques.

Little Chief looked back at him. His tiny figure was complete in every detail, even to the brightly coloured feathers of his head-dress, and he was the most precious thing in LeGrand's house. He was so old that they weren't even sure just how many years ago he had been made. And Jacques thought having the little boat a very special and wonderful thing, for you never knew what might happen to you when you owned something made by a real Indian—an Indian someone in your own family had really known and been friendly with.

Jacques had heard many times about the way his long-ago relative had brought peace between the Micmac Indians and the white men. And of how one of the chiefs had given him the tiny canoe as a gift of friendship. The Micmac chief had told Jacques' relative to keep it always, for it would guide him smoothly along the stream of life, and keep him on a true and upright course.

Little Chief had indeed been well taken care of. He had been passed from father to son, by one LeGrand after another, until now he belonged to Jacques. Truly it was the one and only treasure Jacques and his mother owned. And in spite of the fact that life had not always run smoothly, Jacques' mother insisted that little Chief watched over them, and when Jacques was only a tiny baby she nailed up the shelf over his bed. There Little Chief stayed day after day, and at night and in the early morning he was always Jacques' companion.

Together they lay in bed listening to the early morning sounds, staying very quiet so as not to disturb Jacques' mother who was still sleeping on the other side of the room. The best sound of all was the sound of waves washing on the shore below. Mixed with the sound of waves came the chatter and cry of thousands of waking birds. The sounds seemed to blend into one that moved all around him, for Jacques' home was high on a grassy hill at the very tip of the Gaspé Peninsula. All around you could see water, and you could look across to the great rock and to the big island of Bonaventure, which were the nesting places of thousands of birds.

The water and the birds—he had heard them for as long as he could remember. At night the birds sang to their young, and had made a lullaby for little Jacques, too. He used to lie and listen, long after his mother had stopped singing, and thought him asleep. The birds and the waves never stopped, and as he lay listening, he imagined all sorts of strange and wonderful adventures. And always they included Little Chief.

Across the room, his mother stirred and woke, and smiled at him. "Good morning, son, and what wonderful adventure is it that you and Little Chief plan now?"

"He says it's been a long time since he went sailing. He wants me to take him down to the water again."

"Well, we shall see," she said. "There is much to do today, but perhaps if you work well there will be time this afternoon."

Jacques jumped up and put the boat on its shelf. He pulled on his clothes and ran to the door of the one-room house.

"Capi!" he called. "Capi!"

A big brown and white dog came bounding up to him, wagging his tail excitedly in good morning. Jacques stooped down and patted him, slapping the dog's shaggy sides, and smoothing its head between the ears. "We must hurry, Capi," he said. "This afternoon we go sailing."

Inside, Jacques' mother was already putting breakfast on the rough wooden table. Capi followed Jacques back into the room, and lay on the floor against the boy's legs as he and his mother ate. Jacques fairly swallowed his food whole, so much did he want to begin the day's work.

One of the things Jacques most loved to do was to take Little Chief down to the beach and let him sail in a quiet pool. Then he would pretend that he was one of those long-ago settlers. He would make friends with the great Indian Chief, and would ride with him on dark waters. Sometimes he and Little Chief hunted porcupine together, or shot at the great white birds that flew overhead, back and forth from the mainland to Bonaventure. And Capi always went along, and sometimes became another character in the pretend stories.

But the games could never last very long. For one thing, there were always jobs waiting to be done. And for another, his mother worried so every time he took the tiny canoe from its rough wooden shelf.

"But, Mama," he would say, "you know I can't lose him. He sails in a quiet place, where the water comes in to make a little pool."

"I know, dear," she would answer, "but be careful, won't you? I don't know how we would get along without him."

Mr. Duval, at the store, said Mama was superstitious. Jacques wasn't quite sure what that was. But he did know that the little canoe was very important to her.

As soon as Jacques finished the last bite of breakfast, he and Capi ran out and around to the back of the house where a big clay oven stood. It was Jacques' job to build a good hot fire inside. Then, after a couple of hours, his mother would rake out the hot ashes and put loaves of bread in to bake. Jacques had taught Capi to help him. The big dog ran back and forth between the wood pile and the oven carrying pieces of wood. Jacques sang and whistled as they worked, and thought of the fun he would have on the beach that afternoon.

When the fire was going well, he called to his mother and then hurried to Mr. Laurent's small farm nearby, where he did odd jobs in exchange for food from the fields. Jacques was a strong boy, and now that he was growing tall, could even guide the plough as it was pulled along by Mr. Laurent's ox.

Today, as he hoed along between the rows of peas and cabbages, with Capi trotting along at his heels, he planned what he would do down at the beach. He would begin digging an outlet at one side of the pool, so that the water could flow more inland, and make a really river-like place for little Chief to sail. He wondered how long a river he would be able to make, and he wondered, too, if he would ever really sail on great waters. Would he ever do great things like those other LeGrands of long ago who had helped to settle the new world?

Jacques Cartier LeGrand. That was his whole name. When he was small, his mother used to laugh and say, "Such a big name, for such a little boy." And his father would answer, "But someday he will be a strong brave man. It is right that he should have the name of a great man."

Jacques liked to think about that *first* Jacques Cartier. Long, long ago, when many people still thought the earth was flat, and the ocean full of dreadful monsters, Jacques Cartier had sailed from France, out over the wide unknown water, in search of new lands. And after a long hard voyage, he had found this very peninsula. Jacques could look over from his home and see the big cross set on Mount Joli to mark the place.

When Jacques had first understood this story, he said, "Must I sail on the ocean, and look for new lands? Is that what you mean me to do?"

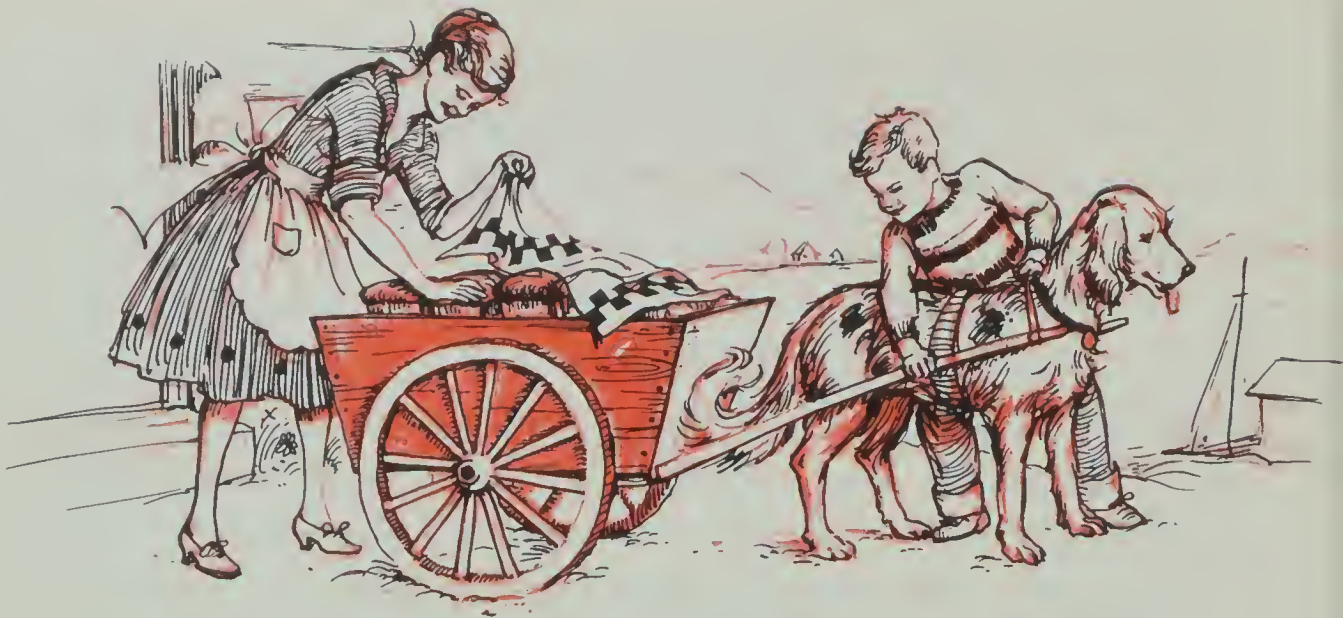
Then his parents had laughed. "Oh, no. You will grow strong and brave. But you do not have to go away for that. There is much for a brave man to do right at home." Jacques often wondered what the strong brave things that he was to do would be.

Up and down the rows he went. His feet sank in the dry broken earth, and the dirt even got inside his heavy laced shoes, but Jacques scarcely knew it. He was thinking hard again about how to dig the river for Little Chief. Only two more rows now, and then he would be through. He put away his hoe, then calling goodbye to Mr. Laurent, who was busy mending fishing nets, he and Capi raced off.

Instead of going directly home, Jacques ran farther up the hillside to a high secret spot he came to every day. He liked to sit here, looking out over the water. It lay calm and smooth below him, reflecting the bright blueness of sky. Jacques had seen it in many moods, and he never tired of looking, but it always puzzled him to think how this water which could look so peaceful could also be so cruel and wild. And as always, when he came to this spot, Jacques

thought of his father. He remembered the terrible night long ago—the night when all the village had kept watch on the beach, waiting for the fishing boats. The wind and rain had torn at them furiously, and the waves had thrown themselves up on the beach with a deafening roar. All through the night they watched, but the boats did not come home. And Jacques' father had been one of the lost men. Jacques had been only seven then, but he remembered his father well. He could picture him just as plainly now, and feel the grip of his big rough hand.

Always when his father went off with the fishing boats, he would kiss Mama goodbye. Then he would smile at Jacques, and put his hand firmly on the boy's small shoulder. "Jacques will take care of you," he would say. "When I go, Jacques is man of the house." And now, Jacques was man of the house for always.

It made him jump up to think of it. Mama would be waiting for him to take the freshly baked bread to the village. After that, if he hurried, there would be time to play on the beach before he had to help the men at the cleaning tables when they brought in the day's catch of cod. There wasn't much time for the man of the house to sit around and daydream.

Just as he stood up to whistle for Capi, who had wandered off, a huge white gannet screeched and sailed overhead. He watched it as it sailed on its black-tipped wings out over the water, and swooped down out of sight on the other side of the island. Then he gave a sharp whistle. In an instant he heard happy bounding and barking. "Come on, Capi, we have work to do."

As if he knew exactly what was expected of him, Capi ran down the slope to the house. Already Mama was out in the yard putting the basket of warm loaves into the dog cart. It was a good picture. Mama always had such a clean comfortable look, and when she worked she sang softly, as if just for herself. It was a good feeling—belonging to Mama. They ran up as she was covering the bread with a clean cloth.

"I thought I would have to call you, but you are just in time. You are good boys, both of you."

Without being told, Capi stood between the shafts of the cart so that Jacques could fasten him. When Jacques was smaller he used to ride in the cart behind the basket, but now that he was growing so big and tall, he walked alongside and gave Capi only the loaves to pull.

"When you give Mr. Duval the bread, tell him I will have the rug for him tomorrow. Goodbye, my boys."

Mama always called them boys, as a little joke, but truly, he and Capi were as good friends as any two boys could ever be. Jacques turned and waved as Capi pulled the little cart around a bend of the road. Mama still stood watching. She never went back into the house until he was out of sight, and always she was smiling and waving. Her eyes didn't smile like they used to when Papa was home, but her mouth was always smiling and singing, and she never complained, even when she didn't get much money for the lovely hooked rugs over which she worked so hard.

As he walked along beside the rattling wooden cart, Jacques thought again of Little Chief. He remembered how Mama had stood holding him the day after that terrible storm when Papa had not come home. He remembered how Little Chief had stared back at her, sitting upright and proud in the tiny canoe.

"He means we must be brave," she said. "We must be brave as Papa would want us to be."

And often in the days that followed, Jacques found his mother holding the little boat. Somehow he knew that it made her feel close to Papa, and helped her to be strong and brave. Mama said they must always take good care of Little Chief, and some day it would belong to his little boy. It made Jacques smile to think of himself grown up. It was hard to imagine that some day he might have children of his own.

Two or three times as he walked along in the sunlight, horns honked behind him, and big cars went swiftly past. Jacques caught a glimpse of faces, or a brief sound of music. Then he was alone again on the road. He wondered why the big cars went so fast, when it was so good to walk in the sun, and smell the ocean smell in the air, and listen to the cry of the birds. And now they rounded the last bend and came to Mr. Duval's shop.

Jacques carried in the basket of bread and began putting the loaves in a neat row on a shelf behind the counter. "Mama says she did not quite finish the rug. I will bring it tomorrow."

Mr. Duval was sitting in an old chair at the back of the shop. His hands worked carefully with a small knife and a bit of wood. Jacques could see that it was going to be an ox. Mr. Duval looked up at Jacques and said, "Tell her it is all right. There is plenty of time."

Jacques laughed. He thought of the big cars rushing by. "Those people in cars," he said, "I guess they don't have plenty of time. Why do you think they are always in such a hurry? Sometimes they don't even stop to see the great rock."

"They have a long way to go," answered Mr. Duval. Then he looked up from his carving again. His pale blue eyes seemed to look somewhere far off. He nodded his white fringed head. "Yes, and when they get back, they go right on hurrying. Why, I've stood on one of those streets down there in the United States, and I've seen thousands and thousands of autos rushing by, so thick you couldn't step between them."

This was what Jacques loved. To get Mr. Duval talking about the time years ago when he had visited a relative in the United States. Mr. Duval's nephew lived in a marvelous place called New York, where buildings went up into the sky, and men used machines to take off their whiskers and to go up stairs. But today, Jacques did not want to talk. He had to get back in time to make the river for Little Chief.

"Say hello to Little Chief for me," Mr. Duval called after him, as he ran out to the cart. Mr. Duval knew all about Little Chief, and always spoke of him as if he were a real person. Sometimes, it almost seemed to Jacques as if he were.

Going home seemed to take ages, but now at last they were on the beach. Jacques went past the cleaning tables and rough wooden racks where fishing nets hung to dry, and on to a long deserted stretch of sand, where driftwood and old abandoned boats lay about. He had talked to Little Chief all the way, holding him gently, and explaining how he was going to make the river. When they reached the pool of water, he put the boat down and began to scoop up sand. Capi ran off up the beach, as if deciding that digging in the sand was not very interesting.

"If it really works, Chief, we could even make a tunnel for you to go through, or a sort of cave so that you could sail right inside."

Little Chief looked steadily at Jacques with his painted eyes. The red feathers of his headdress shone brilliantly in the bright sunlight. Jacques almost thought he nodded slightly in agreement.

As he dug, Jacques threw the sand well away so that it would not be piled too heavily on the sides of the river. Already, the water from the pool was beginning to flow in. A little piece of the river was made; he began to dig faster throwing sand out at both sides. If he worked hard, he could have a really long river made before the sun got too low. He became so interested in his digging that he didn't even wonder where Capi had run to. He was so interested that he didn't notice when the little boat bumped against the side, and stood motionless, with Little Chief still staring straight ahead, and his bright feathers shining brighter then ever in the sunlight. Jacques was so interested in his digging that he didn't even notice how far away from Little Chief he had gone.

And it wasn't until the great bird swooped down and up again, that he knew it was near.

Then he stood up with a cry of alarm. The huge bird was not

like any he had ever seen before. It was all black. And there in its beak, moving higher and farther away each second, was his precious canoe.

"No! No!" he yelled. "Come back! Come back!"

But the big black bird flew even higher, sailing out over the water and gliding down out of sight on the far side of the island.

Little Chief was gone.

As if he knew there was trouble, Capi came running. "Oh, Capi, why didn't you stay here? That bird would never have come down if you had been here. Why did it have to happen? We've got to get it back, Capi. We've got to."

Jacques almost cried. But since he had become the man of the house he had learned that crying was foolish. When something bad happened you just had to be brave, and think what to do about it. So first he must go home. But how would he ever have the courage to tell Mama that he had lost Little Chief?

Birthday Adventure

Johnny Martin skipped for joy, his brown eyes flashing with excitement. At last it was his birthday and he was going on his first ice-fishing trip with his father and sister.

Bruno, their police dog, was trotting across the ice up ahead, pulling the sled that was laden with their fishing lines, a bundle of wood for the stove,and their lunch. Carefully he followed the row of little evergreen branches that had been placed along the snowy surface to mark the path to their fishing hut.

Across the lake Johnny could see the huts of other groups of people who,like the Martins, were out to try their luck.

"I'm glad I'm eight at last," sighed Johnny. "Eight years is a long time to wait to go fishing."

His father laughed. "Your birthday came just in time, Johnny! There won't be many more fishing days this year. If it stays as mild as this, the ice will soon start to break up. As you see, the fishing groups are now few in number and some of these are already preparing to leave."

"You're sure you want to stay, Johnny?" teased his sister. "You might fall through a hole in the ice, you know!"

Johnny shook his head. "Of course I'll stay," he said. Wasn't his father the best fisherman in the whole country?

Their little hut was well away from shore on the wide, ice-covered lake. When they arrived, Mr. Martin lit the stove; an old oil drum turned on its side with a piece of stovepipe sticking through the roof for a chimney. Mary and Johnny unpacked the sled. Next they unharnessed Bruno and the big dog bounded away over the ice, glad to be free.

New ice had formed over the fishing hole in the night. Their father chopped it away; then he baited the long lines with minnows.

At first Johnny was too excited to talk. Carefully he dropped his line through the ice and waited for a bite. If only he could catch the first fish!

Catching a fish would be exciting. But waiting was very boring. Johnny was almost starting to think about something else when he felt a sudden tug on his line. "Hey!" he whooped.

"Watch out there, Big Boy," laughed his father. "You'll lose it if you get so excited."

Breathing hard, and gripping the tip of his tongue between his teeth, Johnny pulled in his line fast, hand over hand. In a minute a big whitefish was flopping at their feet on the ice. "Good boy!" said his father. Johnny beamed.

But for Mary, the best part of fishing with Daddy was listening to his stories of long ago while you crouched on the ice waiting for the next bite. "Please, Daddy, tell us a story," she coaxed him now.

"Just wait till I put this fresh bait on Johnny's line." Father frowned at the knot he was tying. "Then I'll tell you about the little farm at Longford where I grew up. . . ."

"Now tell about the time you met Mother!" said Mary when he had finished. That was her favourite.

But Mr. Martin shook his head. "Aren't you two hungry?" he asked. "It's high time we had lunch." While he put a battered tin teapot on the stove to boil, Mary unwrapped the thick meat sandwiches.

In the midst of the munching, they heard a whine outside the hut. "It's Bruno—he's hungry too!" said Johnny. "Here, Bruno. Here, boy!" he coaxed, breaking off a corner of his sandwich.

But Bruno wasn't interested. He kept on whining. "That's strange," said Mr. Martin. He got up and went outside. "What is it, boy? What is it, then?" he asked softly.

Bruno jumped up on him with sharp little barks. Suddenly Mr. Martin knew what was worrying the dog. Between their tiny hut and the mainland he could see a thin crack slowly spreading across the surface of the ice.

He stood frowning at that dark crack a moment, stroking his long chin while he thought what to do. Then he went back into the hut and stooped down to the children.

"The ice has cracked," he told them quietly. "It isn't safe for us to go back. So we'll have to wait here until they bring out a boat for us."

Mary's dark eyes widened; Johnny gave a frightened gasp that was almost a whimper.

"Oh, come now! There's nothing to worry about," their father said. "Look, I'll bait your lines again and you can fish while I

tell you about the time I met your mother. It was somewhere up near Gravenhurst, and I was out berrypicking. . . . ."

Even though it was Mary's favourite story of all, it sounded different today. Every now and then Daddy stopped and went to the doorway to look at the shoreline. His eyes were worried. The sun began to go down, and the cold blue night crept up around them, and still no boat came.

"Wh-what if it gets dark and they haven't come for us?"

"Why, then Mother will call the police chief at Barrie," his father answered, as calmly as if he were saying Mother will bake a cake. He gave Johnny a playful shove. "What's the matter, Big Boy? You wanted adventure on your birthday—and here it is!"

The cold night deepened. Stars pricked the sky like diamond-headed pins. "I guess we'll have to stay here all night—eh, Dad?" Johnny tried to sound as if he thought it would be fun.

"That's right," said Mr. Martin calmly. "It's too dangerous for a boat to come out in the dark between the floating blocks of ice. But we've plenty of wood left. I'll build up the fire and we'll be snug and warm."

Johnny and Mary felt better as the stove began to glow with cheerful heat. "Now," said their father, "let's curl up like Bruno by the fire and go to sleep. We can pretend we're explorers camped on our way to the North Pole."

Mary peered sleepily out through the doorway and saw the strange shapes of ice blocks bobbing slowly past their floating island in the moonlight. "They're like baby icebergs," she murmured. Next moment she and Johnny and Bruno were sound asleep.

Quietly and carefully, Mr. Martin crept outside the hut. What he feared had happened. Their little ice island was drifting out into the open waters of the lake. All night he kept watch. When their small stack of wood was used up, he broke up the bench and stool, the hut's only furniture, and burned them, too.

At the first faint streak of dawn he went outside again. Good!

Their island was still fairly large. They had drifted straight across the lake in the night and were just off Kempenfeldt Bay.

As Mr. Martin stooped to enter the hut again, Bruno gave a low growl. His ears were pointed, sharp and listening.

Out of the gray sky, came the sound of an airplane. Mr. Martin could see it now, flying low and circling. He straightened up and waved both arms. The plane woke Mary and her brother. They tumbled out of the hut and flapped their arms like their father. "Hey, you plane! Hey, you mister up there in the plane!" yelled Johnny. "Shh! Silly, he can't hear you!" said Mary.

"But he sees us! Look he sees us!" Johnny shouted. Sure enough, the plane turned and flew towards the hut.

"Is the plane going to pick us up? Is it, Daddy, is it?" asked Mary, jumping up and down.

It was Johnny's turn to say, "Silly! . . . He'll go back and tell them where to send the boat, won't he, Daddy?"

"That's right, son," said Mr. Martin. "There, see—he's dipping his wings. It won't be long now!"

The plane zoomed so low above their heads that Johnny and Mary and even Mr. Martin couldn't help ducking away from the noise. Then it flew back the way it had come.

"Oh boy!" breathed Johnny. "Won't *this* be something to tell the kids at school!"

The sun was climbing high in the sky when at last they heard the sound of a motor across the water. Then they could see the boat, a tiny dark speck in the distance, threading its way between the huge cakes of ice.

"Now then," said Mr. Martin, taking Bruno's harness rope. "You first, Mary—I'll knot this tight round your waist—so! Now it's your turn, Johnny. There you are. Now, you're to crawl out to the edge of the ice, and I'll keep tight hold of the rope. Careful, mind! And be ready to jump in when the boat comes alongside!"

The boat had nearly reached them. The man at the tiller cut down the motor. The other two men started working the boat slowly towards the ice with their oars. "Ahoy!" they called. "Did you think we were never coming?"

On her hands and knees, Mary crawled to the edge of the ice. Johnny crept along behind her. He could feel the ice tilting and floating under him. But he felt the strong tug of the rope in his father's hands. He was all right.

"All right, little girl. Jump now!" Strong arms lifted Mary into the boat and other strong arms reached out to help Johnny. When Johnny was safely seated in the stern, his father let go the rope. "Daddy, hurry!" begged Mary; for the dark blue water was already beginning to widen between the boat and the ice.

Mr. Martin took Bruno by the collar. "All right—here we come!" he called. He reached a long arm out and grabbed the side, pulling the boat in so that he and Bruno could leap to safety.

With a snort the motor started up. The boat turned and headed for home. Johnny settled back in his seat with a thump of relief. Then—"Oh, Daddy! Do you know what? We forgot my fish!"

"Never mind, Big Boy," said his father. "Now that you're a real fisherman, there'll be plenty of fishing trips next year!"

How They Broke Away To Go To The Rootabaga Country

Gimme the Ax lived in a house where everything is the same as it always was.

"The chimney sits on top of the house and lets the smoke out," said Gimme the Ax. "The doorknobs open the doors. The windows are always either open or shut. We are always either upstairs or downstairs in this house. Everything is the same as it always was."

So he decided to let his children name themselves.

"The first words they speak as soon as they learn to make words shall be their names," he said. "They shall name themselves."

When the first boy came to the house of Gimme the Ax, he was named Please Gimme. When the first girl came she was named Ax Me No Questions.

And both of the children had the shadows of valleys by night in their eyes and the lights of early morning, when the sun is coming up, on their foreheads.

And the hair on top of their heads was a dark wild grass. And they loved to turn the doorknobs, open the doors, and run out to have the wind comb their hair and touch their eyes and put its six soft fingers on their foreheads.

And then because no more boys came and no more girls came, Gimme the Ax said to himself, "My first boy is my last and my last girl is my first and they picked their names themselves."

Please Gimme grew up and his ears got longer. Ax Me No Questions grew up and her ears got longer. And they kept on living

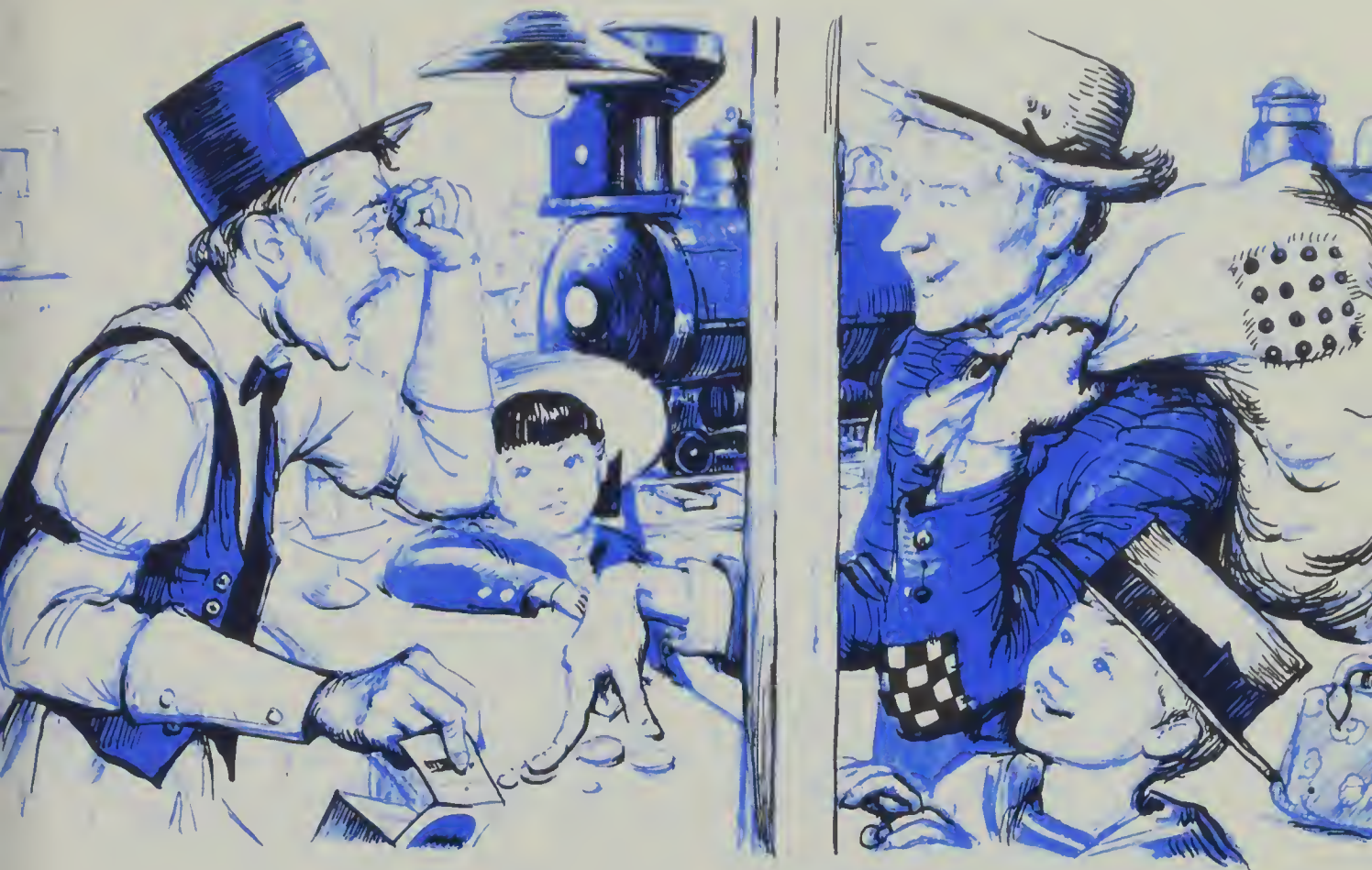
in the house where everything is the same as it always was. They learned to say just as their father said, "The chimney sits on top of the house and lets the smoke out, the doorknobs open the doors, the windows are always either open or shut, we are always either upstairs or downstairs—everything is the same as it always was."

After a while they began asking each other in the cool of the evening after they had eggs for breakfast in the morning, "Who's who? How much? And what's the answer?"

"It is too much to be too long anywhere," said the tough old man, Gimme the Ax.

And Please Gimme and Ax Me No Questions, the tough son and the tough daughter of Gimme the Ax, answered their father, "It *is* too much to be too long anywhere."

So they sold everything they had, pigs, pastures, pepper pickers, pitchforks, everything except their ragbags and a few extras.

When their neighbours saw them selling everything they had, the different neighbours said, "They are going to Kansas, to Kokomo, to Canada, to Kankakee, to Kalamazoo, to Kamchatka, to the Chattahoochee."

One little sniffer with his eyes half shut and a mitten on his nose, laughed in his hat five ways and said, "They are going to the moon and when they get there they will find everything is the same as it always was."

All the spot cash money he got for selling everything, pigs, pastures, pepper pickers, pitchforks, Gimme the Ax put in a ragbag and slung on his back like a rag picker going home.

Then he took Please Gimme, his oldest and youngest and only son, and Ax Me No Questions, his oldest and youngest and only daughter, and went to the railroad station.

The ticket agent was sitting at the window selling railroad tickets the same as always.

"Do you wish a ticket to go away and come back or do you wish a ticket to go way and *never* come back?" the ticket agent asked, wiping sleep out of his eyes.

"We wish a ticket to ride where the railroad tracks run off into the sky and never come back—send us far as the railroad rails go and then forty ways farther yet," was the reply of Gimme the Ax.

"So far? So early? So soon?" asked the ticket agent wiping more sleep out of his eyes. "Then I will give you a new ticket. It blew in. It is a long slick yellow leather slab ticket with a blue spanch across it."

Gimme the Ax thanked the ticket agent once, thanked the ticket agent twice, and then instead of thanking the ticket agent three times, he opened the ragbag and took out all the spot cash money he got for selling everything, pigs, pastures, pepper pickers, pitchforks, and paid the spot cash money to the ticket agent.

Before he put it in his pocket he looked once, twice, three times at the long yellow slab ticket with a blue spanch across it.

Then with Please Gimme and Ax Me No Questions he got on the railroad train, showed the conductor his ticket and they started to ride where the railroad tracks run off into the blue sky and then forty ways farther yet.

The train ran on and on. It came to the place where the railroad tracks run off into the blue sky. And it ran on and on chick chick-a-chick chick-a-chick chick-a-chick.

Sometimes the engineer hooted and tooted the whistle. Sometimes the fireman rang the bell. Sometimes the open-and-shut of the steam hog's nose choked and spit pfisty-pfoost, pfisty-pfoost, pfisty-pfoost. But no matter what happened to the whistle and the bell and the steam hog, the train ran on and on to where the railroad tracks run off into the blue sky. And then it ran on and on more and more.

Sometimes Gimme the Ax looked in his pocket, put his fingers in and took out the long slick yellow leather slab ticket with a blue spanch across it.

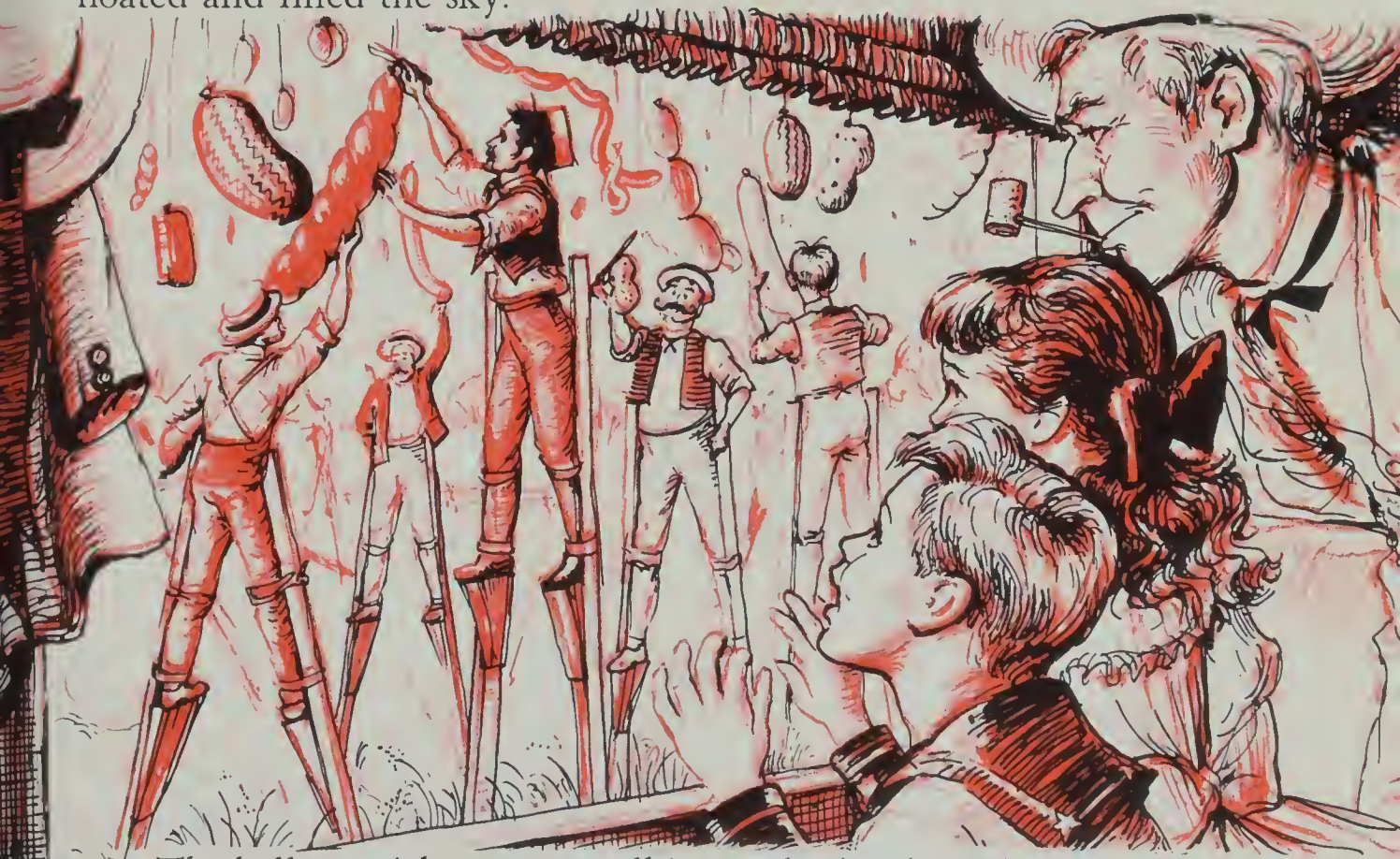
"Not even the Kings of Egypt with all their climbing camels, and all their speedy, spotted, lucky lizards, ever had a ride like this," he said to his children.

Then something happened. They met another train running

on the same track. One train was going one way. The other was going the other way. They met. They passed each other.

"What was it — what happened?" the children asked their father.

"One train went over, the other train went under," he answered. "This is the Over and Under country. Nobody gets out of the way of anybody else. They either go over or under."

Next they came to the country of the balloon pickers. Hanging down from the sky strung on strings so fine the eye could not see them at first, was the balloon crop of that summer. The sky was thick with balloons. Red, blue, yellow balloons, white, purple and orange balloons—peach, watermelon and potato balloons—rye loaf and wheat loaf balloons—link sausage and pork chop balloons—they floated and filled the sky.

The balloon pickers were walking on high stilts picking balloons. Each picker had his own stilts, long or short. For picking balloons near the ground, he had short stilts. If he wanted to pick far and high he walked on a far and high pair of stilts.

Baby pickers on baby stilts were picking baby balloons. When they fell off the stilts the handful of balloons they were holding kept them in the air till they got their feet into the stilts again.

"Who is that away up there in the sky climbing like a bird in the morning?" Ax Me No Questions asked her father.

"He was singing too happily," replied the father. "The songs came out of his neck and made him so light the balloons pulled him off his stilts."

"Will he ever come down again back to his own people?"

"Yes, his heart will get heavy when his songs are all gone. Then he will drop down to his stilts again."

The train was running on and on. The engineer hooted and tooted the whistle when he felt like it. The fireman rang the bell when he felt that way. And sometimes the open-and-shut of the steam hog had to go pfisty-pfoost, pfisty-pfoost.

"Next is the country where the circus clowns come from," said Gimme the Ax to his son and daughter. "Keep your eyes open."

They did keep their eyes open. They saw cities with ovens, long and short ovens, fat stubby ovens, lean lank ovens, all for baking either long or short clowns, or fat and stubby or lean and lank clowns.

After each clown was baked in the oven it was taken out into the sunshine and put up to stand like a big white doll with a red mouth leaning against the fence.

Two men came along to each baked clown standing still like a doll. One man threw a bucket of white fire over it. The second man pumped a wind pump with a living red wind through the red mouth.

The clown rubbed his eyes, opened his mouth, twisted his neck, wiggled his ears, wriggled his toes, jumped away from the fence and began turning handsprings, cartwheels, somersaults and flipflops in the sawdust ring near the fence.

"The next we come to is the Rootabaga Country where the big

city is the Village of Liver-and-Onions," said Gimme the Ax, looking again in his pocket to be sure he had the long slick yellow leather slab ticket with a blue spanch across it.

The train ran on and on till it stopped running straight and began running in zigzags like one letter Z put next to another Z and the next and the next.

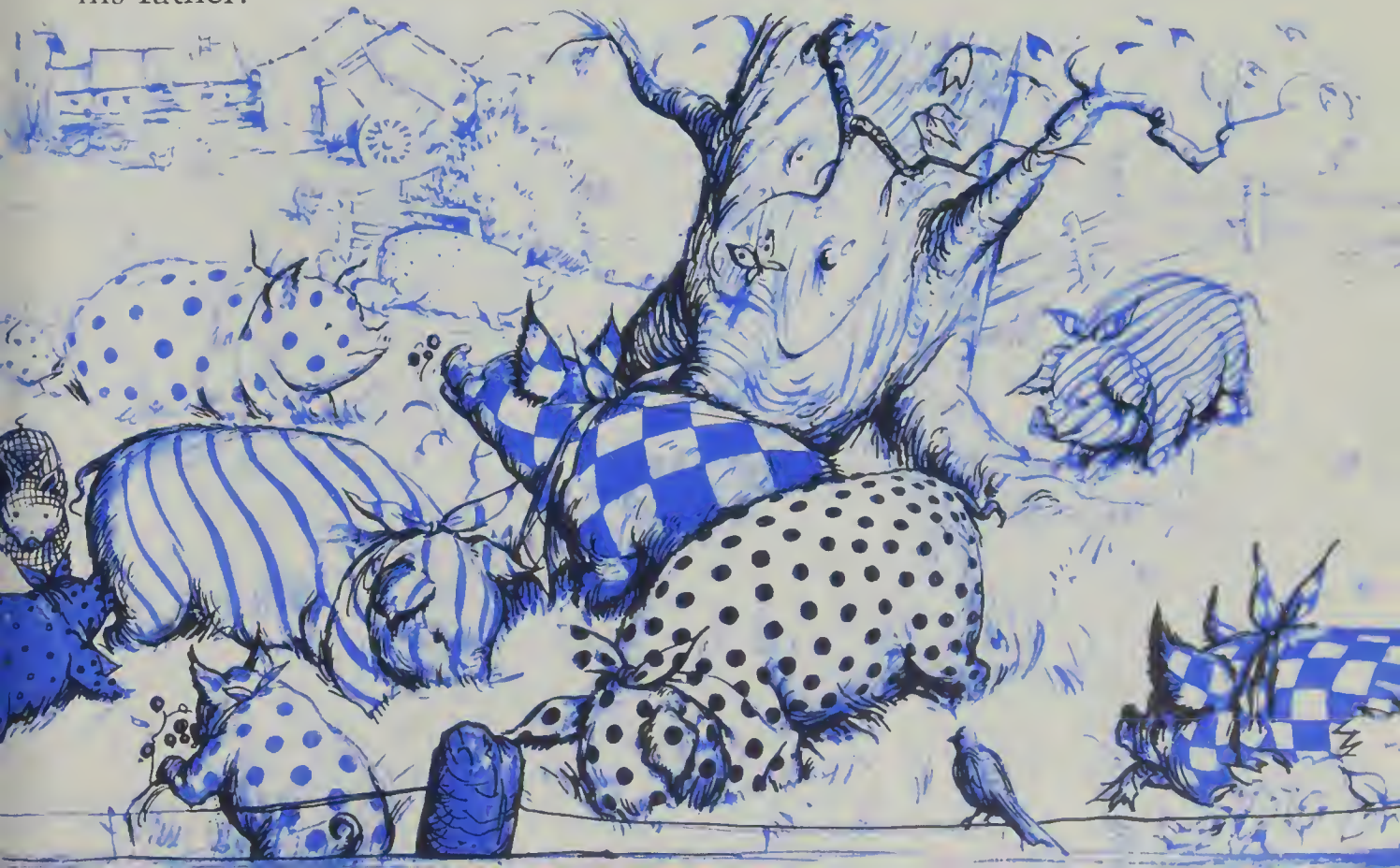
The tracks and the rails and the ties and the spikes under the train all stopped being straight and changed to zigzags like one letter Z and another letter Z put next after the other.

"It seems like we go half way and then back up," said Ax Me No Questions.

"Look out of the window and see if the pigs have bibs on," said Gimme the Ax. "If the pigs are wearing bibs then this is the Rootabaga country."

And they looked out of the zigzagging windows of the zigzagging cars and the first pigs they saw had bibs on. And the next pigs and the next pigs they saw all had bibs on.

The checker pigs had checker bibs on, the striped pigs had striped bibs on. And the polka dot pigs had polka dot bibs on.

"Who fixes it for the pigs to have bibs on?" Please Gimme asked his father.

"The fathers and mothers fix it," answered Gimme the Ax. "The checker pigs have checker fathers and mothers. The striped pigs have striped fathers and mothers. And the polka dot pigs have polka dot fathers and mothers."

And the train went zigzagging on and on running on the tracks and the rails and the spikes and the ties which were all zigzag like the letter Z and the letter Z.

And after a while the train zigzagged on into the Village of Liver-and-Onions, known as the biggest city in the big, big Rootabaga country.

And so if you are going to the Rootabaga country you will know when you get there because the railroad tracks change from straight to zigzag, the pigs have bibs on and it is the fathers and mothers who fix it.

And if you start to go to that country, remember first you must sell everything you have, pigs, pastures, pepper pickers, pitchforks, put the spot cash money in a ragbag and go to the railroad station and ask the ticket agent for a long slick yellow leather slab ticket with a blue spanch across it.

And you mustn't be surprised if the ticket agent wipes sleep from his eyes and asks, "So far? So early? So soon?"

Kirby's Gander

I was grabbing some air outside the Cavu Club when far above me, I heard the slow clang of geese bucking head winds, winging north. Ho-woak-clang! Oak-woak-clang! Like bugles in the night.

"That's the old gander," a voice said behind me. "Cheering them up, keeping them going."

I turned and saw a big, broadshouldered fellow standing in the shadows. It was Red Kirby, the bush flier Mike Farrell had told me about. The one who was marooned at Moon Lake, 300 miles this side of the tundra for five and a half months. And there, with the geese clanging above us, Kirby told me the story of his gander.

"I was four hours out of Edmonton," Kirby said, "when it happened. Lost my oil—and when the engine seized I had to come down near Moon Lake.

At the time I crashed the lake was black with waterfowl—ducks mostly.

A couple of hundred Canadas, though, were the real overlords of the lake. I figure all the honkers were related to one big gander and his mate. Abraham, I named him.

One morning, when I was fishing at a cove on the north side of the lake, I spotted Abraham's mate pulling dry grasses for her nest. Every day after that I crept back to watch her.

It was on the nineteenth day when I realized I might not be found for some time . . . if ever. That's when I started thinking desperately. About the geese, I mean.

I remember reading that some scientist had discovered that young geese form an attachment for the first living object they see.

Usually that's the mother. But it might be a cow or a man, or even a cat—which is why, even among domestic geese, you'll sometimes see one that's happier following an old horse around than being with its own kind.

If I never got back to civilization, wouldn't it be something to have those geese clanging down out of the sky to me each spring again?

I waited a couple of days more, to be sure Biddy was really nesting. Then I headed for the cove.

The minute I came near, Biddy hissed the alarm. Abraham came at me, wings out, beak open.

I threw my flying jacket over his head and tackled. Inside two minutes he'd got one wing free, and I couldn't see for blood. Then I sprawled on the wet reeds and the old rascal got his neck out. Ever been bitten by a goose?

I got him, though, I finally pinned his wings under my left arm, and with the big neck stabbing like a snake, I walked down to the nest. Biddy flopped off, scattering grey eiderdown over the seven big eggs. I let Abraham see me handle them. Then I backed up and let him go.

He jumped right back at me. Then he gave a hiss and jumped into the water.

Now, I wondered, would Biddy abandon the nest?

For half an hour she sat motionless in the water, until I was sure the eggs would get chilled.

The same thing must have occurred to Biddy for she started talking it over with Abraham. He must have told her to get back on those eggs for she waddled ashore and went back on the nest.

I had two more wrestling matches with Abraham before they let me take a daily look at the eggs.

The hatching was about four days off. I was all jumpy, without knowing why. Finally I grabbed the .22 rifle and headed for the cove.

Feathers and loose hair and old grass were floating in the mist. A timber wolf and Abraham were battling it out.

As I came up, the wolf closed his teeth on the gander's left wing. Abraham quacked in agony; then came in on the injured wing, buffeting the wolf with the other. The wolf yowled in his throat, but he wouldn't let go.

He began to shake his head madly, trying to rip the wing off; and the gander, hurt though he was, stabbed about trying to get the wolf's eyes.

I would have shot sooner if I'd had the chance. The wolf turned around, almost stupidly, then staggered to the bushes. He fell on his side.

Abraham did not protest when I carried him to the water—just lay heavily in my arms, blinking his eyes with pain.

Then Biddy came over. She quacked softly to Abraham, caressing the white patch on his cheeks with her beak.

Abraham sat there stolidly, and that seemed to send her into despair. She talked away soft and pleading. I left them alone together.

When I came back that afternoon they seemed to have found a certain peace again.

The goslings were hatched on the 12th of June. Two of them were already out of the shells when I got up with the sunrise. Abraham hunkered right beside me, his left wing trailing stiffly on the soft new grass, unable to keep away at such a moment.

Every so often, I'd push my hand under old Biddy's feathers—ever been bit by a she-goose?—and pull out a sticky little yellow gosling. It would roll around on the palm of my hand. Abraham would quack softly to it. Biddy would whisper in her throat and I would get in my pleasing, "Goo-goo-goosie!"

I even broke my last precious chocolate bar into small pieces and tried to get them to eat, but they weren't interested.

After the sixth egg hatched, Biddy waited for a while. Then, with the gander marching ahead, she led the six young ones into the water. They hadn't eaten yet—they could scarcely stand—but they swam as if they had been swimming for years

When it came time to return, Abraham and Biddy headed for the reeds a hundred yards from the nest. I stood there calling softly, "Gee-gee-geese! Come, little goosies—gee—gee-geese!"

Four of them came peeping through the reeds to my feet.

I put them all in a box for the night and weighted the top with a rock.

I named my four: Tiny, Sally, Pedro and Joe. The other two accepted me, but the only time my four seemed happy without me was when they were in the water. The smallest one used to squat on my shoe and, after a while, it would even sit there while I walked carefully from the shore to the coop beside my tent.

One afternoon, when summer was coming to an end, Abraham started trumpeting. He was marshalling the young fry to try their wings.

"Oak-Woak-honk!"

The young geese, swimming fast, spread their wings, spattered

with their feet—and rose in heavy, wobbly flight into the wind—then, gaining altitude, up and across the lake and around and around the smoky sky, in an ecstasy of freedom.

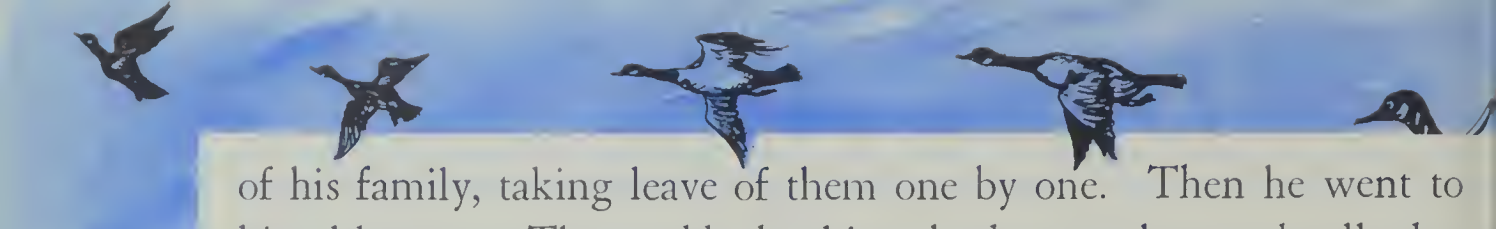
"Honk-woak-back!"

Obediently the young banked in the sun, wings stiffening to break the heavy landing. They skidded a bit in the water, then lined up again, impatient for the starting signal.

When I edged down through the dry bushes to the south of the lake, my four wheeled toward me noisily. They landed out in the deep water, then swam over to me. Tiny climbed up on my boots.

Then, from the middle of the lake, came Abraham's stern command. "Honk-woak". He was telling them the time for play was over.

Obediently my four young honked back, their voices still without the trumpet note.

Soon there were unmistakable signs of fall in the air. The ducks were thinning on Moon Lake, but not a goose had left—on account of Abraham's wing.

I had almost forgotten that, till one day the geese went into an emergency session. By this time all the young geese were taking long flights daily, filling the sky with bugling—the real sign of their coming of age.

But that day, old and young alike were lined up in the middle of the lake. Abraham and his family were at the north end.

Biddy, this time, sounded the takeoff call. The eight of them swam like mad, spattered with their feet, lifted with their wings—but only seven of them got into the air. Abraham's left wing couldn't support his weight.

The older ganders honked to Abraham not to let this thing get him down. For a week they encouraged and rallied him. But it was no use.

Finally came the day when Abraham named a new flock leader and bade farewell to all his old friends. At the last he swam in front

of his family, taking leave of them one by one. Then he went to his old mate. They rubbed white cheeks together and talked a while. Then he swam strongly to the rear and all the geese on the lake began to regroup.

This time, another she-goose gave the takeoff order. The ganders flapped and rose, the young followed, the females taking off last. They circled the lake and formed into a broken-arrowhead formation, a sure sign they were going some place.

Abraham watched them, motionless, long after I couldn't see them any longer.

I called over to him then, telling him we'd make out all right. But he didn't want any of me. He swam off across the lake and hid among the broken reeds.

Three weeks later, Mike Farrel came in."

Kirby fished in his pocket before going on with his story. "When Mike handed me this I felt like a forgotten old man who's just got a letter from one of his children."

He handed me a small piece of aluminum, easily rolled. I held it up to the light. Three words were punched on it, as if with a shingle nail. KIRBY—MOON LAKE. And at the bottom there was a small "t".

"I banded all six of the young, as well as the two old ones," Kirby said. "This is the only tag turned in. They got it when they picked up some geese for banding on the Wildlife Refuge in Illinois."

"This small 't'—what does it stand for?"

"I put the initials of my four on their tags. That was little Tiny's band—the one that used to sit on my shoe."

I returned the tag to Kirby. He put it in his pocket, carefully.

3

DON'T GIVE UP

If you've tried and have not won,
Never stop for crying;
All that's great and good is done
Just by patient trying.

If by easy work you beat,
Who the more will prize you?
Gaining victory from defeat,
That's the test that tries you.

PHOEBE CARY

Willie's Good Recess

Willoughby Rufus Snow was small and dark and, right now, he was cold and unhappy. He was the smallest boy in the second grade of a big public school. He was the only boy who wasn't enjoying recess.

The second grade, along with three other grades, always had recess in the great big high-ceilinged gym. The gym was huge—bigger than three good-sized barns. It was also cold. Willie Snow, who had left the nice warm climate of Georgia only three weeks ago, shivered and felt very cold and lonely indeed.

None of the other children seemed to mind the gym being cold. They liked it because they moved so fast they kept warm anyway. Some played dodge ball, others played bat ball. And at one end of the gym a whole lot of them were skipping rope, chanting loudly as the rope smacked the concrete floor.

Willie watched them from one corner. He didn't know how to play dodge ball. He didn't know how to play bat ball, and he didn't even own a skipping rope. Willie shivered and wished he were back in Georgia where the sun was warm and the children were his friends.

Finally, Willie got so cold that his nice even teeth chattered and he just had to move around to get warm. He walked around the huge gym until he came to the stage at one end. Willie was just going to walk past when he saw the big drum. Sometimes the children of the school orchestra left their instruments on the stage between rehearsals and this was one of those times.

Willie walked straight up to that drum. It was big and beautiful with "School Band" painted in red letters on the sides. Willie looked at it and looked at it, and just then Willie's teacher came by. Willie looked up at the teacher and then he looked at the drum. "Please, Miss Carter," Willie said almost without meaning to, "Could I play that drum?"

"Yes," said Miss Carter. "If you are very, very careful."

Miss Carter walked on past the stage but Willie didn't see her go. He didn't see anything but that great big beautiful drum that drew him like a magnet. He picked up a drumstick and tapped the drum very lightly. There was a surprised little "boom" like the croak of a bull frog.

Willie beamed. He tapped the drum harder. "Boom!" That was a good sharp boom like the slam of a door. This time Willie really swung the drumstick. BB-OOO-MM. The deep shivery sound rolled and grew like thunder over the cotton fields. Willie stopped the noise with his hand, though it sounded wonderful. He held the drumsticks lightly now and tapped, tap-tappa-tap, very gently. The beam on Willie's face grew wider and wider. Tap-tappa-tap very softly. Willie was feeling his way. Tap-tappa-tap. Slowly, gradually the tune came. It was as though the drumsticks were leading and Willie's small swaying body just naturally followed.

The tune unfolded in Willie's mind. He no longer heard the shouts of the other children. He no longer heard the thud of their balls or the sound of the ropes. All Willie heard was the tune—a lovely old spiritual that his father and Uncle Job used to sing in Georgia in the warm summer evenings:

"I got a robe. You got a robe.
All God's chillun got a robe."

Willie Snow hummed the words to himself and beat the strong familiar tune on the drum. When he got to the chorus Willie had forgotten everything except the big drum and the wonderful rolling sounds that came from it.

"When I get to Heav'n, goin' to put on ma robe,
Goin' to walk all over God's Heav'n.
Heav'n, Heav'n."

Willie wasn't cold any more. Willie wasn't small any more, and he certainly wasn't lonely. Willie was part of a great big wonderful flood of sound that was coming out of that drum.

When the clanging bell that meant the end of recess finally sounded out over the gym and even over the roll of Willie's drum, he was surprised. He was so surprised that he just stood with a drumstick in each hand while the last rumble of the drum melted away with the clanging of the bell.

Then Willie saw Miss Carter and the other children. They had stopped playing ball. They had even stopped shouting and talking. They had all crowded around the edge of the platform and were looking up at Willie. Now, all of a sudden they broke into a great noisy burst of applause that was even bigger and noisier than the school bell.

He didn't know what to make of it. He looked at Miss Carter and she was clapping too. Finally she stopped and moved over beside him. "Thank you very much. We all loved the concert."

Willie gave a little gasp of surprise. They were clapping for him! All those big, northern children, who were used to this big

northern school, were clapping for him and the sounds he brought out of that fine, round drum! They too liked that drum and the good tunes that Father and Uncle Job used to sing.

Willie stood on one foot and then on the other but he didn't know what to say. "Did you have a good recess?" Miss Carter asked. Willie nodded his head excitedly and his teeth gleamed in his friendly little face.

"Oh, yes, Miss Carter," he said. "I did."

"So did we all," said Miss Carter. "Thanks to you, Willie."

"On the way upstairs, Johnny Griswold gave him a little poke. "Say, Willie, how's chances to teach me how to roll that drum?" he asked.

Willie grinned. "Sure thing, Johnny, if you show me how to play dodge ball."

"It's a deal. Tomorrow at recess."

Willie was feeling very fine indeed.

Mario's Morning Talk

Mario was shy. He knew this because he often heard his mother say, "That Mario! He's so shy! That's his trouble, he's so shy!" He thought about this a great deal and began to feel that shyness was a special quality that belonged to him.

Mario was a boy who had many interesting ideas, but of course, being shy, he found it difficult to share them even with his mother who understood him better than anyone else. He had many thoughts about many things, but when he tried to speak, the words seemed to get mixed up. It was hardest at school, especially when it was his day to join a reading discussion. Sometimes he was absent.

The day he wept was worst of all. At the discussion table he sat in silence while tears splashed over the pages of his notebook. The words would not come.

Finally, it seemed necessary to talk about Mario's problem. The other children regarded him sympathetically, and all admitted to feeling the same way in one situation or another.

Jane said, "When my mother's having a tea, I try to stay in the kitchen because I feel foolish with all those ladies!"

Fred said, "I don't like to talk because many times what I say is wrong and nobody likes to be wrong."

And Michael said, "Sometimes at the table, I'm afraid to say what I think for fear my brother will laugh."

The teacher declared that adults, too, struggle with this problem, particularly if they have to learn the language and ways of a new country.

Mario listened to this, and began to feel less alone in his difficulties; and he thought,

"My mother must feel this way! My mother's shy, too!"

He entered more happily into the school lessons after this, but it was plain that the Morning Talk was going to be a great test for him. Sometime during the year he must stand before the class and talk about some topic of his own choice.

Mario's parents had come from a mountain village near Lake Lugano in Central Italy, and they often recalled the sunny skies, the mountain lakes and streams, the vineyards, and the friends and relatives they had left behind. His father suggested that Mario talk about Italy, and the whole family entered into his preparation until it seemed that the school day would hardly be long enough to tell it all.

But what day would it be? The Autumn Term ended and Mario had not decided.

Early in the New Year, he chose March 10, a date that seemed comfortably far away; but time passed quickly, with skating, a Valentine party, measles, and the excitement of joining a Cub Pack. March found Mario still unprepared, or at least, still unwilling. The decision became critical for him. He must choose a day and present his talk if the other children and his parents were to think well of him. . . . His father said that, as a New Canadian, it was especially important for him to have success.

Finally Mario, announced that he would give his talk on the morning of April 2.

Morning Exercises were solemn that day. Health inspection reports, attendance, the milk order, the weather and the news, all were over quickly.

The Class Director announced that Mario Conti would give a long-awaited Morning Talk; his topic, Italy. She said that Mario and his parents had lived in Italy and that Mario would speak from first-hand knowledge.

"We are fortunate to have the opportunity of learning about Italy in such an interesting way," she declared. Papers in hand,

Mario walked to the front. The room was quiet. One could see the tears on his face. He began to speak slowly, his gaze fixed on a distant, high-flying cloud.

"I am going to tell you about Italy. I know about Italy because that is where I lived with my family until two years ago when we came to Canada. There are mountains almost everywhere in Italy, with glaciers that melt into streams, flowing down into blue, mountain lakes. Italy is more than one and one-half times as large as Ontario, but the population of Italy is more than twelve times greater than the population of Canada. Many of these people are poor because Italy has few great forests, rich mines or farms, and during the long, hot summer there is not enough rain. Although they are skillful and work hard at growing things and making things, many live on very little. That is why we came to Canada." Gradually Mario faced his audience. He told about school in Italy and about the black smock he had worn. He smiled, and the other children smiled too, imagining Canadian boys at school in such a costume.

"But," he added, "my little sister, Angelina, wore a pink smock with a big white bow under the chin. My father said that she looked like one of the angels in Botticelli's picture."

Mario remembered that he had started to school when he was very young and had worked hard at his lessons.

"Castello, where we lived, is a tiny village built on a mountainside. There are no shops or stores. Everything we needed had to be carried up one mile of stone steps from the village of San Mamete on the lakeshore below. In Castello there are no real streets or lawns or gardens, only stairs, and passageways between old stone houses built with thick walls and very close together.

"My father is a shoemaker. He owned a shop in San Mamete. He taught me to stitch a sole onto a shoe, and some day I, too, will own a shop and sell fine shoes that I have made.

"In the sunny afternoons, we picked potatoes in the little fields, and put them into a basket that hung around the neck on vine-straps.

Then we would hurry off to swim and splash in the waterfalls and pools of a mountain stream."

With growing confidence, Mario smiled as he told how he had played with his friends, climbing on the rock walls around Castello.

"Using the tips of our fingers and toes, we climbed to a great height, and never fell. Visitors said that the children of Castello were like mountain goats."

At the end of the day, Mario and Angelina would watch their mother make spaghetti by the kitchen window. The dough was made of fine flour, salt and water. It was mixed and rolled into flat sheets which were left to dry overnight. It was then cut into long, thin strips and put to boil in a big, black iron pot that hung over the fire. Before eating, it was sprinkled with tiny flakes of delicious cheese. Supper usually ended with an orange freshly plucked from a tree and still warm from the afternoon sun.

"These are some of the things I remember about Italy. I hope I will be able to go back with my father and visit Castello again.

There are many fine roads, tunnels and bridges in Italy. Italians are proud of these and of other important things our people have done. . . . Marco Polo, who found the road to China, Galileo, a great scientist, Christopher Columbus, who led the way to the New World, Michelangelo and da Vinci, and Cellini, who loved beauty and created it for all people to enjoy. . . .

I will end my talk by saying that I am glad to be in Canada. It is my home now. My father says that we have not come to Canada just to share the freedom and prosperity that you have, but to share with you the precious things that we bring with us from the past and from so many miles away."

Mario's conclusion was impressive. He floated to his seat on a cloud of triumph.

That night at the supper table, Mario told his father what had happened and the whole family shared in the reflected glow of his great moment in the new school.

As he went off to bed, Mario remarked, happily, "Canadian children don't know much about making shoes. That must be the subject of my next talk."

A Surprise For Sala

In all of his nine winters of life, Sala had never before been so happy to see the snow. He laughed aloud as the chill Arctic winds blew down from the hills and the thin new ice spread across the water. The boats were pulled up on to the beaches and the little skin kayaks set high on their racks.

The season of the walrus hunt was over. Now, in the lengthening nights, the men of the Eskimo camp began to sort and repair their many traps. And in the daytime they walked with their eyes on the new-fallen snow, watching for the tracks of the white fox. The trapping season was about to begin.

Sala had always loved the wintertime. It was fun to hitch the dogs to the long narrow sled and go riding with his father to the trap line. His deerskin suit kept him so snug and warm that no matter how hard the wind blew he did not mind the long distances between the traps. But this winter the season of the foxes was a very special time, because of a promise made to him by his father.

"My son," his father had said to him one day, "you are a big boy now and you have finished with playthings. Now you must be of use to the camp. If the fox skins are many this season, then, before the coming of the white partridge, you shall have a small rifle of your own."

This wonderful promise filled Sala with great joy.

"My father is Idlout, the Great Trapper," he told himself. "Before the coming of spring he will have the skins of many, many foxes to exchange at the trading post. Surely, there will be enough to obtain a small rifle."

So he helped the men to polish the rusty traps and to place them

in neat piles. Each day he found a little time to walk in the hills. He went to the top of every small knoll where a curious fox was liable to go, and he watched for the tracks that would tell him if the small furry animals would be many or few. And all the while he thought of the shining rifle that their skins would buy.

He remembered how wonderful it was to see the partridges come back in the spring. All winter the people of Sala's camp saw very few birds. Saucy black ravens often flew low over the igloos and cried out to them with their hoarse voices.

Sometimes, a big round-eyed owl would come to perch with fluffed feathers on a rock behind the camp.

But no one paid much attention to either the ravens or the owls. The ravens seemed to know that they were not at all good to eat. The owls just sat staring and looking very wise. Perhaps they also knew that no one would want to eat an owl unless he were very hungry, and it was easy to see that there was always plenty of fresh meat in Sala's camp.

But when the partridges returned, that was a different matter. Everyone saw them, everyone shouted the news to another. It was an exciting time for both young and old.

These white partridges were beautiful birds with bright beady eyes and sharp bills. Their feathers were soft and white and marked only by a small black spot on the tips of their tails. They even had

fuzzy feathered legs which gave them a comical look as they strutted across the snow in search of the frozen seeds and berries which lay beneath.

If they heard someone coming they would puff out their feathers and sit so still that they looked like little mounds of snow. Then, it was very hard for anyone to see them. Sometimes, if they were very frightened, they would run clumsily, but quickly, across the snow for a short distance before they took to the air. But they never flew very far and soon came down again to rest and feed.

How Sala's people rejoiced over the return of these fat little birds. They knew then that the long winter was almost over. But this was not the only reason for their joy. Partridge meat was very good to eat. It tasted so delicious after the many months of eating only fish and seal. Everyone who had a rifle of his own went hunting. It was great sport. A white partridge was usually the first of all the birds and animals that a small Eskimo boy learned to shoot.

"Beware, white partridges," the boy would shout to the empty winter sky. "When you return, I, Sala, the Great Hunter, shall go looking for you with my rifle on my back."

Then he would laugh aloud at his own boldness and go running back to camp.

That winter Sala's mother grew a little tired of his talk about the white partridges.

"Run out from this igloo, my Great Hunter," she would say teasingly. "My ears grow weary with your boasting."

Then Sala would call to his two small sisters, to romp with him in the snow. But they soon grew tired of their big brother. There was only one game he wanted to play. Always Sala was the hunter and they the partridges.

His father, too, grew weary of listening to his stories and games about the white partridges. Sometimes, he even wished he had not made his promise. But he could not break it now that his word had been given.

The only member of the Eskimo family who did not tire of the boy's talk was the old man, Akumalik, who was Sala's grandfather. Akumalik had once been a fine trapper and a brave hunter, but now he was old and crippled. No longer could he run beside the dog sled on the winter trail. His eyes were growing dim and no longer could he see to shoot the walrus and the seal.

Now he sat in the igloo close to the warmth of the oil lamp. And he passed the long hours by making himself useful in many ways. His long dark fingers were as nimble as ever. From the balls of gilling twine which had been obtained at the trading post, he made the big nets which would be used for the spring fishing. At the end of each day he repaired the dog harnesses and the traces. He cleaned the guns after the hunt.

And when there was no more work to be done, he amused himself by carving little birds and animals from the ivory of a walrus tusk.

Often, as Akumalik worked, Sala sat beside him and talked. The old man would nod and smile and listen.

"Will the white partridges come early this spring?"

"Perhaps, yes," his grandfather would reply. "If the sun shines hotly and the winter's cold is not too great."

"Tell me again of the time they came in flocks so large that they

seemed to drop from the sky, and of how they spread the snow in numbers so great that one could see white partridges everywhere."

"Ah, yes," Akumalik would say. "Then there was much shooting, much eating, and much happiness in the camp. That time will surely come again. If the flocks are flying northward when the strong winds blow from inland out to the sea, then will the white partridges come to us in great numbers and our camp will feast as it did then.

"And I, Sala, with my new rifle, shall walk in the hills. Then I shall shoot so many birds that I will have to call for my father's sled to carry them home."

The old man would laugh when the boy spoke like this.

"You, Sala, have not yet shot your first partridge. That great day is still to come."

The boy's face would light up with joy and excitement when he thought of it. The old man's face, too, would be touched with happiness, because he remembered how he had once walked in the hills in search of the white partridges. Then there would be a silence between them while each dreamed his own dreams.

So the winter passed. The foxes were many. Sala's father travelled long distances to visit his traps. Often he was away for many days at a time. On the short trips Sala went with him, but on the long trips he would remain at home to do the chores about the igloo.

Sala's mother was very busy. She skinned the foxes. Then she mounted the skins on wooden stretchers to dry. Soon there was a large pile of downy furs ready to be taken to the trading post to be exchanged for food, clothing, and other articles needed by the family. The trading post was a long distance away and so Idlout only made one winter trip. This came at the end of the fox season and he would take with him a sled load of furs. This was a most exciting journey.

One evening when the harnesses were mended, old Akumalik took up a piece of walrus tusk and began to work on a new carving.

"What do you make this time?" asked Sala.

"You shall see," replied his grandfather with a smile.

Sala coaxed and coaxed but Akumalik would not tell. So at last Sala gave up asking, but he did not give up watching the white piece of ivory in the old man's hands. As the two of them talked together he looked and looked, but what it was going to be he could not guess.

Every day Akumalik worked on his carving. Sometimes, he even neglected the harnesses and the guns. But no one in the igloo asked him any more questions. They were pleased to see that he was busy and happy.

The work went very slowly. The old man had only a knife, a file, and a small piece of sandpaper with which to work. Then, too, because of the dimness of his eyes, he had to hold the work close to his face. But he did not give up.

As the weeks passed, Sala could see that the carving was made up of many parts. There was a smooth flat piece, three more that were small and rounded, and a great many tiny parts that looked like bits of twigs. Still the boy had no idea what it could be.

Now his mother began to smile knowingly as she tended the oil lamp. She would laugh to see the puzzled look on the face of her son. After that Akumalik only worked on his carving when Sala was gone from the igloo. He was afraid that the boy, too, would guess what he was making.

The nights grew longer and longer until there was only a small bit of sunlight each day. Then slowly the days grew longer and the nights a little less. Sala could see that his noonday shadow grew shorter, as each day the sleepy-looking sun climbed higher in the sky. The whole Arctic land lay buried under the snow. The north-wind blew over the frozen sea. But Sala only laughed because he knew that spring was on its way.

Then one night when he came in for his supper of seal meat, his grandfather had a surprise for him. It was a small parcel wrapped in a piece of rabbit skin.

Akumalik laid it in Sala's hands.

"No longer am I able to tend the traps, nor hunt, nor fish with the other men," he said in a voice that was filled with sadness. "Those days for me will come no more. But for you they are about to begin. I wish that I could give to you the small rifle for which you long. But I have little to call my own. So I give you this small gift that I have made with my hands. I hope that it will give you pleasure."

The old man spoke so solemnly that the boy was a little afraid, and his fingers shook as he carefully unwrapped the rabbit skin.

An ivory carving lay cupped in his hands. And such a wonderful carving! On a smooth flat base sat three white partridges. Two of the birds had their heads bent as if they were feeding and the third stood erect, as if it were on guard. Every feather, every bill and toe had been carefully carved. The ivory had been polished until it shone. So real they seemed, that Sala half expected the tiny birds to startle and fly away.

For a long time the boy could say nothing Everyone in the igloo was quiet, too.

"White partridges—oh, Grandfather! I am so grateful," Sala whispered at last.

Never in all his life had Sala received a gift that made him so happy. He held the carving ever so gently and just looked and looked.

His mother and little sisters looked, too.

"It is a wonderful gift," they said.

Old Akumalik sat back and smiled with pleasure.

Just then Idlout came into the igloo. He had been away hunting all day and was feeling tired and cross because he had caught nothing.

The boy jumped up as his father came in, and held out his gift for him to admire.

"Look what the grandfather has given me," cried Sala proudly to his father.

But Idlout was not in a good mood for looking at ivory partridges. He scarcely glanced at the carving in the boy's hands.

"That is fine," he answered. "But it is only a plaything. Put it away and let us eat. I am very hungry."

His words made the old man feel saddened.

"Yes," said Akumalik, "it is only a useless plaything after all."

Then Sala's mother took down the cooking pot from where it hung over the flame of the oil lamp, and she set it among them. Everyone dipped in his fingers to find the pieces of meat he liked the best. She brought a kettle of hot black tea and they all filled their mugs and drank noisily. But Sala was so excited about his gift, that he could scarcely eat anything at all.

As the sun rose higher and shone longer hours each day, the cold lessened. Akumalik still worked with the guns and the harnesses, but sometimes he went to sit at the igloo door in the sunshine.

Here he would smoke his pipe and call out greetings to the other people of the camp.

"Look! Spring has come. The old man sits in the sun," they would say to each other as they passed by.

Sala kept his carving still wrapped in the rabbit skin, hidden among his treasures in a corner of the igloo. Every day he found time to uncover it and hold it in his hands. Sometimes, if there was no one close by, he would touch the little ivory birds gently with his fingers and he would talk to them.

"You are fine partridges. The grandfather made you just for me and I am very proud," he would whisper. "But my father says you are only playthings, and playthings are not for a big boy who will soon have a small rifle of his very own."

Idlout knew that Sala played and talked to the carving in secret and this made him feel unhappy. He was a little ashamed that he had spoken of it so unkindly. But he was in a hurry to have his son become a hunter like himself, and it always made him cross to see him playing as if he were a small child.

The old grandfather also knew how Sala amused himself and he was very pleased. He only wished that in some way his gift would prove to be useful as well as amusing.

At last came the wonderful day when Idlout began to prepare for the long journey to the trading post. The fox skins were curled into soft balls and stuffed into large cotton bags. Sala was pleased that the skins were so many. Surely there were enough to get all the things that his family needed and one small rifle as well.

After a long, hard journey to the post, the trading began. Slowly Sala's father collected a large pile of food, clothing and other things which were needed the most—matches, molasses, big bars of soap, round balls of twine for the fish net, and a large piece of canvas to repair the summer tent. There were many other things as well.

Sala looked at the tokens that still lay on the counter. They were very few. Idlout looked too and suddenly he was a little worried. The fox skins had been many but they were not so valuable as the year before. He had expected that there would have been more

tokens left. However, he looked up at the trader and spoke in a brave voice.

"I wish a small rifle for my son," he said.

These were the words that Sala had waited so long to hear. It was a wonderful moment.

The trader counted the tokens. He counted them again. Then he shook his head.

"There are not enough for a small rifle," he answered. "Perhaps you wish a box of sweet biscuits instead."

Sala's father shook his head. So did Sala. So did all the Eskimo people who were watching.

Idlout looked at the pile of things on the counter.

Maybe we do not need them all, he thought.

He looked at the stockings for the little sisters, the sewing thread for Sala's mother and the warm shirt for the grandfather. Then he shook his head again. So did Sala and all the people. They all knew that everything there was needed.

When Sala shut his eyes to hold back the tears, he could see nothing but white partridges flying far, far away. So he quickly opened them again and walked away. If he were going to cry he did not want to do it where everyone could see him. That would be the most dreadful thing of all.

So, while his father and the trader talked, and all the people listened, Sala stood close by the gun rack and sadly looked at the little rifles. He wondered if the trader would mind if he touched them. Then he thought of the white ivory partridges which he carried in his pocket. He had forgotten all about them. He hoped they weren't broken. Gently he felt the little package. The partridges were safe!

Suddenly, all was quiet in the trading post and the boy raised his eyes.

The trader was staring at him. So were his father and all the people.

Sala's little brown face grew red with shame.

"What have you there?" asked the trader as he came from behind the counter.

The boy hung his head. He was so frightened that he could scarcely speak.

"It is nothing of importance," said Idlout in a cross voice.

But the trader paid no attention to him at all. He knelt down in front of Sala and held out his hand.

"Let me look at it, please," he coaxed.

Idlout was ashamed and unhappy. How could his son play with that useless toy right in the trading post for all to see?

All the other Eskimo people looked interested and they crowded around Sala and the trader. Only Idlout stood back.

Sala opened his fingers a little and the trader took the ivory carving into his own big hand. It was now so quiet in the trading post that one could hear the people breathing. Poor Sala wished with all his heart that he was still at home in the camp with his mother. This surely was an awful moment.

"Is this yours?" asked the trader.

Sala nodded. So did his father, and so did all the people. The people did not really know. They were just trying to be helpful.

"Who made it for you?" was the trader's next question.

"The old grandfather—Akumalik," answered Sala in a small voice.

"Oh, yes, I have heard tell of him," said the trader. "It has been said that he was a great hunter and trapper. Many were the white fox skins that he once brought to this trading post. Now I am happy to see that his fingers are still busy. This is one of the finest ivory carvings that I have ever seen. White men like these very much. Will you sell it to me?"

Sala's eyes became big and wide. His mouth fell open. Did the trader mean that there were White Men who wanted to play with his toy? Surely this could not be.

Then the trader named a sum of money, and Idlout's mouth fell open, too. So did the mouths of all the people.

After that there was talk, more tokens on the counter and more counting. At first Sala just stood and looked, and wondered what all the excitement was about.

After a few minutes his father explained to him that if he gave the trader his ivory partridges, there would then be enough tokens for the small rifle.

"Oh, yes, yes," cried Sala so loudly and so quickly, that everyone began to laugh—Idlout, the trader, and all the people.

And that was how it came about that when Sala walked out of the trading post he had a shiny new rifle in his hands, instead of a plaything in his pocket.

Warrior Woman

Quesada's heart was like a stone in her breast although her fingers sliced the red meat of the buffalo into thin slices and laid them carefully in a little pile to one side. From the river which flowed a little way from the door of the tipi she could hear the shouts of her brothers and their friends. They were splashing and playing otter in its cool, deep waters. Slowly a tear trickled down the side of her nose. Quickly she looked up at the seamed, brown face of her mother sitting at the other side of the doorway. An Indian girl is never supposed to cry, but her heart felt like breaking.

Only yesterday she had been so happy swimming in the river with the boys, hunting with blunt arrows for partridges in the trees. Just last night she had crowded in among the boys at the back of the chief's lodge to hear the good talk of the hunters who had returned from the buffalo hunt. But today her mother had told her that it was ended. Today she was a woman and must do woman's work.

The shouts from the river were coming closer. Quesada raised her head as the boys ran by scooping up their bows and arrows from the grass as they passed her and shaking the water off their glistening bodies like cheerful dogs.

"Come to the woods with us, Quesada."

Instantly she was on her feet, her face lighting up with eagerness.

"No," said her mother. "You are a woman and belong here."

Slowly she sank back to her place and picked up the long, sharp knife. Slowly she began to make the neat, careful slices of buffalo meat that would hang on the bushes until they dried into tough, brown flakes. Later they would be chopped finely, mixed with berries, put into rawhide bags, and bear's fat would be poured over them to make pemmican. Pemmican was good in wintertime when the hunting was hard. It was good, too, when the tribe had to move the village to another place and there was no time for hunting or cooking. It was not good now when she wanted to be with the boys in the woods or the streams, hunting, fishing, swimming, or playing scout in the woods.

Her mother spoke as if in answer to her thoughts.

"Quesada, you must put those ideas out of your mind. It was good to play as you have played. You were a child but you are no longer a child. Now you are a woman and must learn woman's work."

"But Mother I have only seen ten winters. Let me go with the boys today. I will do this tomorrow."

"Cutting that meat is today's job and must be done today, my child."

That afternoon was the longest in Quesada's life. Every time the heap of sliced buffalo flesh grew large she must get up from the ground where she crouched and hang each slippery piece over a branch of the bushes nearby.

Twice, she had to leap to her feet and beat off one of the village

dogs who had come sneaking up for a bite of the tempting meat.

So absorbed was she with her careful slicing that she did not hear the unshod hooves of her father's pony approach from among the other tipis. Patiently he sat and waited for her to see him. His keen eyes did not fail to notice the stain of tears on her grimy face. A sudden movement of his pony made her start and then look up.

"Father!" she cried, running to take the bridle rope and tie it to the stake by the tipi door.

"A fine guard you would make for our village. Why the Sioux could take our tipi and our horses right from under your nose." He smiled as he hung his bow and quiver of hunting arrows by the doorway and squatted by her side.

"I am not a warrior, Father. I am only a woman making pemmican for warriors," she replied and hung her head so that he might not be disgraced by the tears that flowed for the second time that day.

Her father studied her for a moment in silence and then he stood erect.

"Tell your mother to make a feast tonight. I am bringing a guest to our lodge," he said over his shoulder as he turned and walked between the tipis.

As soon as Quesada's mother heard the news there was great activity in the lodge for guests are important among the Blackfoot and must be treated with great courtesy. The dirt floor was carefully swept with a twig broom and smoothed with a crow's wing. The place of honour opposite the doorway was piled high with many skins and furs. Quesada dropped a few herbs on the tiny fire in the centre of the tipi and soon the sweet smell rose into the air to mingle with the smell of buffalo steaks cooking slowly on the coals.

When the tipi was ready Quesada and her mother changed into their best clothing. While Quesada proudly smoothed the snow white buckskin dress with its beautiful beadwork, her mother re-braided her long, black hair.

Dancing impatiently, Quesada could not resist peeking through

the round doorway of the lodge to catch a glimpse of their guest.

"Why it is A-tru-ro!" she called back to her mother.

"We shall have good stories tonight, then," her mother replied, for A-tru-ro was a very old man who had seen and done many things. He could even remember the days before the Blackfoot had horses!

Solemnly they waited until the two men had entered the tipi and were seated. Softly, with downcast eyes, Quesada laid before the old man a wooden bowl on which lay the best pieces of the meat.

Not a word was spoken as the meal was eaten for, among the Blackfoot, eating was a serious affair not to be spoiled by idle chatter.

With a sign of contentment the old man finished eating and wiped his hands on the bunch of sweetgrass that Quesada brought to him. Quietly he reached for the lighted pipe that his host held out to him.

"It is good to eat well," he said. Then looking around at his eager audience, he added with a twinkle, "It is good to talk well, too."

"Tell us of the past, Old One," said Quesada's father. "Tell us of the great warriors you knew."

The old man puffed slowly on his pipe, his face lost in thought.

Quesada looked proudly at the two men sitting on the opposite side of the fire. The old man with his dried-up, wrinkled face that had seen so much and the young man, her father, whose face made his enemies afraid, but which could also smile kindly on those he loved.

"Eeiii," the old man began. "Many, many moons ago when

I was just a boy a great war party came into our lands and hid themselves in the trees down by the river near where we are camped now."

As he talked, the back of the tipi lifted and Quesada's brothers and their friends slipped in quietly for word had gone round the village that the old man was a visitor in their lodge and even "scout in the woods" was forgotten when they learned that stories of the old days would be told that night.

Quesada snuggled in beside her mother, her head resting on that vast, warm bosom. Her eyes sparkled as they always did to hear the tales of the bravery and courage of the warriors of old.

"Yes, just over there the warriors camped, among the trees, by the ford where they could watch our camp. Their keen eyes soon told them that there were no warriors in our villages. It was true, we had suffered a hard winter and there was no meat in the lodges. All our braves were hunting on the plains many miles away.

"Quietly their chief told them of the plans he had made for the attack. Even though there were only old men and women and children in our village, they were afraid our warriors might come back during the day. They would wait until after our cooking fires had died down and we had fallen asleep. Then they would steal into the lodges and kill us as we lay. It was a good plan and the warriors agreed. Hidden in the deep brush they waited until night should fall.

"Now, a group of young girls from our village had been in the hills behind the enemy gathering berries for the pemmican they were sure to have when our mighty hunters returned with the meat. They

came laughing down the trail that led past the hiding place of our enemy. The braves lay still with hands clutching knives and tomahawks. Only one girl raised her eyes to the hiding place and although her heart stopped at what she saw, she moved on laughing like the others. She knew that if she showed even a trace of fear, death would be upon them all. Swiftly they crossed the river and laughing still, parted at the edge of the village. As quickly as she could, the young girl said goodbye to her friends and slipped into the lodge of her grandmother. Now that old lady was a very wise woman and even the chief himself thought it good to ask her advice at times. When her grandmother heard her story, she thought deeply for several minutes.

" 'Daughter of my daughter,' she said, 'the enemy has seen that we are old women and old men in this village. If they have not attacked yet then they must be waiting until we sleep this night. Go swiftly from lodge to lodge and tell each family that they must gather their things quickly and slip out the far side of the village as soon as it is dark. Tell them they must act as if nothing is wrong during daylight, but when it is dark they must move like snakes. Our lives depend on it.'

"The young girl did as she was told and just after night fell the village was deserted although the fires still glowed brightly and the waiting enemy thought the village slept.

"Huddled deep in the forest, the people of our village heard the angry shouts of the enemy and saw the light from their blazing tipis. They were hidden safely with their household goods around them, their herds of horses driven out on the wide plain where the enemy could not linger to round them up.

"For many days they huddled, cold and hungry for they could not risk a fire until shouts told them that their own warriors had returned. Joyously they found their way back to the burned village and the surprised braves who feared that all their people had perished in the fire.

"When the fresh meat that the hunters had carried home was cooked and eaten and the story of the courage of the little girl had been told again and again, the great chief rose to his feet. When everyone had stopped talking and turned to him he spoke.

"My people, our hearts were full when we came down the trail to our village for we had had good hunting and we knew that soon we would see you again. When we saw what was left of our village our hearts were sick because we feared we would never see you again. Because one of our daughters had courage you are restored to us. Give her a name, my people, that all may know what she has done. And the tribe shouted as with one voice, 'Warrior Woman'. And the great chief said, 'It is good.'

"She was a great warrior." The old man said it softly.

"But I thought that only boys could be warriors!"

Quesada was blushing now and ashamed because little girls did not speak so to wise old men but the eyes of her father and mother were on her and they were filled with understanding and affection.

The old man got slowly to his feet and stood before her until she was compelled to raise her eyes from the ground.

"My daughter," said he, "being a warrior is more than being a boy. It means doing your job well without complaint. Being a warrior means being brave when you are afraid inside, and putting the lives of others ahead of your own. Our people need women to make pemmican just as much as they need warriors to kill the buffalo and defend the village. You began to learn your new life today, my daughter. Perhaps one day you will be honoured by your tribe as the Warrior Woman was so long ago."

The old man placed his hand on her head for a moment then stopped and left the tipi. With a sigh the others emerged from the spell the old man's story had cast over them.

In the silence of the tipi while the family slept, Quesada lay looking deep into the embers of the fire. Slowly a smile crept over her face and then she too slept.

Mr. Edwards Meets Santa Claus

The days were short and cold, the wind whistled sharply, but there was no snow. Cold rains were falling. Day after day the rain fell, pattering on the roof and pouring from the eaves.

Mary and Laura stayed close by the fire, sewing their nine-patch quilt blocks or cutting paper dolls from scraps of wrapping paper, and hearing the wet sound of the rain. Every night was so cold that they expected to see snow next morning, but in the morning they saw only sad, wet grass.

They pressed their noses against the squares of glass in the windows that Pa had made, and they were glad they could see out. But they wished they could see snow.

Laura was anxious because Christmas was near, and Santa Claus and his reindeer could not travel without snow. Mary was afraid that, even if it snowed, Santa Claus could not find them, so far away in Indian Territory. When they asked Ma about this, she said she didn't know.

"What day is it?" they asked her, anxiously. "How many more days till Christmas?" And they counted off the days on their fingers till there was only one more day left.

Rain was still falling that morning. There was not one crack in the gray sky. They felt almost sure there would be no Christmas. Still, they kept hoping.

Just before noon the light changed. The clouds broke and drifted apart, shining white in a clear blue sky. The sun shone, birds sang, and thousands of drops of water sparkled on the grasses. But when Ma opened the door to let in the fresh, cold air, they heard the creek roaring.

They had not thought about the creek. Now they knew they would have no Christmas, because Santa Claus could not cross that roaring creek.

Pa came in, bringing a big fat turkey. If it weighed less than twenty pounds, he said, he'd eat it, feathers and all. He asked Laura, "How's that for a Christmas dinner? Think you can manage one of those drumsticks?"

She said, yes, she could. But she was sober. Then Mary asked him if the creek was going down, and he said it was still rising.

Ma said it was too bad. She hated to think of Mr. Edwards eating his bachelor cooking all alone on Christmas day. Mr. Edwards had been asked to eat Christmas dinner with them, but Pa shook his head and said a man would risk his neck, trying to cross that creek now.

"No," he said. "That current's too strong. We'll just have to make up our minds that Edwards won't be here tomorrow."

Of course that meant that Santa Claus could not come, either.

Laura and Mary tried not to mind too much. They watched Ma dress the wild turkey, and it was a very fat turkey. They were lucky little girls, to have a good house to live in, and a warm fire to sit by, and such a turkey for their Christmas dinner. Ma said so, and it was true. Ma said it was too bad that Santa Claus couldn't come this year, but they were such good girls that he hadn't forgotten them; he would surely come next year.

Still, they were not happy.

After supper that night they washed their hands and faces, buttoned their red-flannel nightgowns, tied their night-cap strings, and soberly said their prayers. They lay down in bed and pulled the covers up. It did not seem at all like Christmas time.

Pa and Ma sat silent by the fire. After a while Ma asked why Pa didn't play the fiddle, and he said, "I don't seem to have the heart to, Caroline."

After a longer while, Ma suddenly stood up.

"I'm going to hang up your stockings, girls," she said. "Maybe something will happen."

Laura's heart jumped. But then she thought again of the creek and she knew nothing could happen.

Ma took one of Mary's clean stockings and one of Laura's, and she hung them from the mantelshelf, on either side of the fireplace. Laura and Mary watched her over the edge of their bedcovers.

"Now go to sleep," Ma said, kissing them goodnight. "Morning will come quicker if you're asleep."

She sat down again by the fire and Laura almost went to sleep. She woke up a little when she heard Pa say, "You've only made it worse, Caroline." And she thought she heard Ma say:

"No, Charles. There's the white sugar." But perhaps she was dreaming.

Then she heard Jack growl savagely. The door-latch rattled and some one said, "Ingalls! Ingalls!" Pa was stirring up the fire,

and when he opened the door Laura saw that it was morning. The outdoors was gray.

"Great fishhooks, Edwards! Come in, man! What's happened?" Pa exclaimed.

Laura saw the stockings limply dangling, and she scrooged her shut eyes into the pillow. She heard Pa piling wood on the fire, and she heard Mr. Edwards say he had carried his clothes on his head when he swam the creek. His teeth rattled and his voice shivered. He would be all right, he said, as soon as he got warm.

"It was too big a risk, Edwards," Pa said. "We're glad you're here, but that was too big a risk for a Christmas dinner."

"Your little ones had to have a Christmas," Mr. Edwards replied. "No creek could stop me, after I fetched them their gifts from town."

Laura sat straight up in bed. "Did you see Santa Claus?" she shouted.

"I sure did," Mr. Edwards said.

"Where? When? What did he look like? What did he say?

Did he really give you something for us?" Mary and Laura cried.

"Wait, wait a minute!" Mr. Edwards laughed. And Ma said she would put the presents in the stockings, as Santa Claus intended. She said they mustn't look.

Mr. Edwards came and sat on the floor by their bed, and he answered every question they asked him. They honestly tried not to look at Ma, and they didn't quite see what she was doing.

When he saw the creek rising, Mr. Edwards said, he had known that Santa Claus could not get across it. "But you crossed it," Laura said.

"Yes," Mr. Edwards replied, "but Santa Claus is too old and fat. He couldn't make it, where a long, lean razor-back like me could do so." And Mr. Edwards reasoned that if Santa Claus couldn't cross the creek, likely he would come no farther south than that. Why should he come forty miles across the prairie, only to be turned back? Of course he wouldn't do that!

So Mr. Edwards had walked to town. ("In the rain?" Mary asked. Mr. Edwards said he wore his rubber coat.) And there, coming down the street, he had met Santa Claus. ("In the daytime?" Laura asked. She hadn't thought that anyone could see Santa Claus in the daytime. "No," Mr. Edwards said, "it was night, but light shone out across the street from the saloons.")

Well, the first thing Santa Claus said was, "Hello, Edwards!" ("Did he know you?" Mary asked, and Laura asked, "How did you know he was really Santa Claus?") Mr. Edwards said that Santa Claus knew everybody. And he had recognized Santa at once by his whiskers. Santa Claus had the longest, thickest, whitest set of whiskers this side of the North Pole.

So Santa Claus said, "Hello, Edwards! Last time I saw you, you were sleeping on a corn-shuck bed in your prairie cabin." And Mr. Edwards well remembered the little pair of red-yarn mittens that Santa Claus had left for him that time.

Then Santa Claus said, "I understand you're living now down

along the south river. Have you ever met up, down yonder, with two little young girls named Mary and Laura?"

"I surely am acquainted with them," Mr. Edwards replied.

"It rests heavy on my mind," said Santa Claus. "They are both of them sweet, pretty, good little young things, and I know they are expecting me. I surely do hate to disappoint two good little girls like them. Yet with the water up the way it is, I can't ever make it across that creek. I can figure no way whatsoever to get to their cabin this year. Edwards," Santa Claus said, "would you do me the favour to fetch them their gifts this one time?"

"I'll do that, and with pleasure," Mr. Edwards told him.

Then Santa Claus and Mr. Edwards stepped across the street to the hitching-posts where the pack-mule was tied. ("Didn't he have his reindeer?" Laura asked. "You know he couldn't," Mary said. "There isn't any snow." "Exactly," said Mr. Edwards. "Santa Claus travels with a pack-mule in the southwest.")

And Santa Claus uncinched the pack and looked through it, and he took out the presents for Mary and Laura.

"Oh, what are they?" Laura cried; but Mary asked, "Then what did he do?"

Then he shook hands with Mr. Edwards, and he swung up

on his fine bay horse. Santa Claus rode well, for a man of his weight and build. And he tucked his long, white whiskers under his bandana. "So long, Edwards," he said, and he rode away along the trail, leading his pack-mule and whistling.

Laura and Mary were silent an instant, thinking of that.

Then Ma said, "You may look now, girls."

Something was shining bright in the top of Laura's stocking. She squealed and jumped out of bed. So did Mary, but Laura beat her to the fireplace. And the shining thing was a glittering new tin cup.

Mary had one exactly like it.

These new tin cups were their very own. Now they each had a cup to drink out of. Laura jumped up and down and shouted and laughed, but Mary stood still and looked with shining eyes at her own tin cup.

Then they plunged their hands into the stockings again. And they pulled out two long, long sticks of candy. It was peppermint candy, striped red and white. They looked and looked at that beautiful candy, and Laura licked her stick, just one lick. But Mary was not so greedy. She didn't take even one lick of her stick.

Those stockings weren't empty yet. Mary and Laura pulled out two small packages. They unwrapped them, and each found a little heartshaped cake. Over their delicate brown tops was sprinkled white sugar. The sparkling grains lay like tiny drifts of snow.

The cakes were too pretty to eat. Mary and Laura just looked at them. But at last Laura turned hers over, and she nibbled a tiny nibble from underneath, where it wouldn't show. And the inside of that little cake was white!

It had been made of pure white flour, and sweetened with white sugar.

Laura and Mary never would have looked in their stockings again. The cups and the cakes and the candy were almost too

much. They were too happy to speak. But Ma asked if they were sure the stockings were empty.

Then they put their arms down inside them, to make sure.

And in the very toe of each stocking was a shining bright, new penny!

They had never even thought of such a thing as having a penny. Think of having a whole penny for your very own. Think of having a cup and a cake and a stick of candy and a penny.

There never had been such a Christmas.

Now of course, right away, Laura and Mary should have thanked Mr. Edwards for bringing those lovely presents all the way from town. But they had forgotten all about Mr. Edwards. They had even forgotten Santa Claus. In a minute they would have remembered, but before they did, Ma said gently, "Aren't you going to thank Mr. Edwards?"

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Edwards! Thank you!" they said, and they meant it with all their hearts. Pa shook Mr. Edwards' hand, too, and shook it again. Pa and Ma and Mr. Edwards acted as if they were almost crying, Laura didn't know why. So she gazed again at her beautiful presents.

She looked up again when Ma gasped. And Mr. Edwards was taking sweet potatoes out of his pockets. He said they had helped to balance the package on his head when he swam across the creek. He thought Pa and Ma might like them, with the Christmas turkey.

There were nine sweet potatoes. Mr. Edwards had brought them all the way from town, too. It was just too much. Pa said so. "It's too much, Edwards," he said. They never could thank him enough.

Mary and Laura were too much excited to eat breakfast. They drank the milk from their shining new cups, but they could not swallow the rabbit stew and the cornmeal mush.

"Don't make them, Charles," Ma said. "It will soon be dinner time."

For Christmas dinner there was the tender, juicy, roasted turkey. There were the sweet potatoes, baked in the ashes and carefully wiped so that you could eat the good skins, too. There was a loaf of salt-rising bread made from the last of the white flour.

And after all that there were stewed dried blackberries and little cakes. But these little cakes were made with brown sugar and they did not have white sugar sprinkled over their tops.

Then Pa and Ma and Mr. Edwards sat by the fire and talked about Christmas times up north in the Big Woods. But Mary and Laura looked at their beautiful cakes and played with their pennies and drank water out of their new cups. And little by little they licked and sucked their sticks of candy, till each stick was sharp-pointed on the one end.

That was a happy Christmas.

YARNS

They have yarns
Of a skyscraper so tall they had to put hinges
On the two top stories so to let the moon go by,
Of pancakes so thin they had only one side,

Of "a fog so thick we shingled the barn and six feet out on the fog,"
Of a mountain railroad curve where the engineer in his cab can touch the caboose and spit in the conductor's eye,

Of the boy who climbed a cornstalk growing so fast he would have starved to death if they hadn't shot biscuits up to him,
Of the old man's whiskers: "When the wind was with him his whiskers arrived a day before he did,"
Of the hen laying a square egg and cackling, "Ouch!" and of hens laying eggs with the dates printed on them,
Of the ship captain's shadow: it froze to the deck one cold winter night,

Of the sheep counter who was fast and accurate: "I just count their feet and divide by four,"
Of the man so tall he must climb a ladder to shave himself,
Of the man who killed a snake by putting its tail in its mouth so it swallowed itself,
Of railroad trains whizzing along so fast they reach the station before the whistle,
Of pigs so thin the farmer had to tie knots in their tails to keep them from crawling through the cracks in their pens,
Of Paul Bunyan's big blue ox, Babe, measuring between the eyes forty-two ax-handles and a plug of Star tobacco exactly,
Of John Henry's hammer and the curve of its swing and his singing of it as "a rainbow round my shoulder." They have yarns . . .

CARL SANDBURG

Ahman And The Elephant

Everybody in the elephant camp of the upper valley of the Chindwin knew why the television company had chosen to make pictures in their particular camp. No other elephant camp in all the teak forests of Burma had an elephant to compare with the mighty tusker, Dajoo Ban.

The day the movie men came should have been a happy, exciting day for everyone. But for the brown-skinned boy, Ahman, it seemed like the end of the world.

Mr. Linden, the Englishman in charge of camp, had made up his mind about Ahman that very morning. "I'm having you and your parents moved down to the Valley of Ten Villages next week," he told Ahman. "I'm sorry, boy. There is no other way. Your father is now too lame to be of any further use to us."

Ahman swallowed. To be sent from the only home he had ever known, to be taken away from the giant elephant he loved so much, was more than he could bear. "If—if you would let me work," he said. "I am sixteen."

"In size you are like a boy of thirteen. No, Ahman, in this camp I can use only those who have strong bodies."

Ahman tried again. "Maybe I could earn rupees from the television men to pay for our food."

"So long as you can support yourself you may stay," said Mr. Linden.

With that slim hope, Ahman was among the first to greet the television men.

"What a huge beast!" exclaimed the director when he saw the big bull, Dajoo Ban.

All the elephant people smiled proudly. Even Ahman was pleased, for in his heart Dajoo Ban truly belonged to him. He and the great elephant had spent many secret hours together in the jungle.

When the director started towards the big elephant Mr. Linden quickly warned him back. "Bull elephants have uncertain tempers," he explained. "Dajoo Ban is on edge with all you strangers in camp. He doesn't like people in European dress."

"Why does he have a metal bell when all the others have wooden bells?" asked the director.

"Once an elephant has killed a man he is given a metal bell to show that he is dangerous."

The director gave a low whistle. "I shouldn't think you'd want a killer elephant around."

"He does the work of two ordinary elephants," explained Mr. Linden. "And he's been quite gentle these last couple of years."

During the next three days Ahman followed closely on the heels of the visitors, hoping they might need him. They took pictures of the tree cutters at work. They took pictures of the working elephants,

especially of the giant Dajoo Ban as he pushed the heavy teak logs onto the towing path with his tusks. They took pictures of the female elephants as they dragged the logs down the towing path to the river, where they could be floated to the mill.

Almost all the *oozies*—Burman elephant riders—were put into the pictures. So, too, were most of the boys of Ahman's age, for they were *paijaiks*—ground helpers—who fastened the heavy chains to the logs and took orders from the oozies who rode the elephants. But for Ahman there was no place in the pictures. He was even too weak to handle the heavy elephant chains.

"I am only a useless runt," he told himself bitterly. "Why couldn't I be big and strong like the other boys?"

Sadly he watched the oozies and young Paijaiks line up each night at sundown to be paid for their work in the pictures.

"Look!" his friend Kaya shouted, showing him a fist full of rupees. "They pay more for one day than I earn in a week with the elephants!"

Byoo, another boy, joined them, happily jingling his rupees. "What a pity you are so small, Ahman. Think of all you could buy with this money when the Karen peddler comes again."

Ahman hurried away from them, blinking the tears from his eyes. He could do very well without the jungle knives and rings and pretty cloth of the Karen peddler. All he wanted was a little money for food, so that he could live here and be near his beloved Dajoo Ban. But now all hope was gone. He would be leaving with his parents in a few days.

Early the next morning he went into the jungle as he always did in the elephants' resting days. After three days of heavy work, chains were put on the front legs of the elephants, and they were free to look for food and rest in the jungle for two days.

Morning sun shone down as Ahman walked through the jungle. Above, a blue weaver bird scolded a family of monkeys for coming so close to its nest. But for once Ahman paid no attention.

A couple of miles from camp he came to the top of a hill. Below him only the crowns of a few tall trees stood about the mist in the valley, like lonely islands in a sea of white. His heart quickened as he heard the song of Dajoo Ban's metal bell in the morning stillness.

"I am here! I am here!" he cried out. Then he sat down on a high rock, which had always been their meeting place.

Presently the bell rang louder. He heard the rattle of chain hobbles and the flopping of elephant ears. Then he saw the gray back of the elephant rising out of the sheet of fog.

Ahman held out a tamarind ball. Dajoo Ban took it with his trunk and put it into his mouth. Dajoo Ban could not smile, but he did the next thing to it, by making small squeaking sounds through his trunk.

Suddenly Ahman took the trunk in his hands and pressed it to his chest. "This—this is one of our last days together," he said in a choking voice. "After tomorrow it is finished. Many mornings you will come to this rock and wait for me, but—but I shall never come again."

Dajoo Ban tossed his head and started down the path, which

meant he was still hungry. Ahman followed at his side as the mighty elephant finished his breakfast. At every bamboo clump it paused to eat the tender green shoots. It stripped leaves and twigs from the branches of trees, tore up large tufts of grass, and once in a while picked a small berry no bigger than a bean.

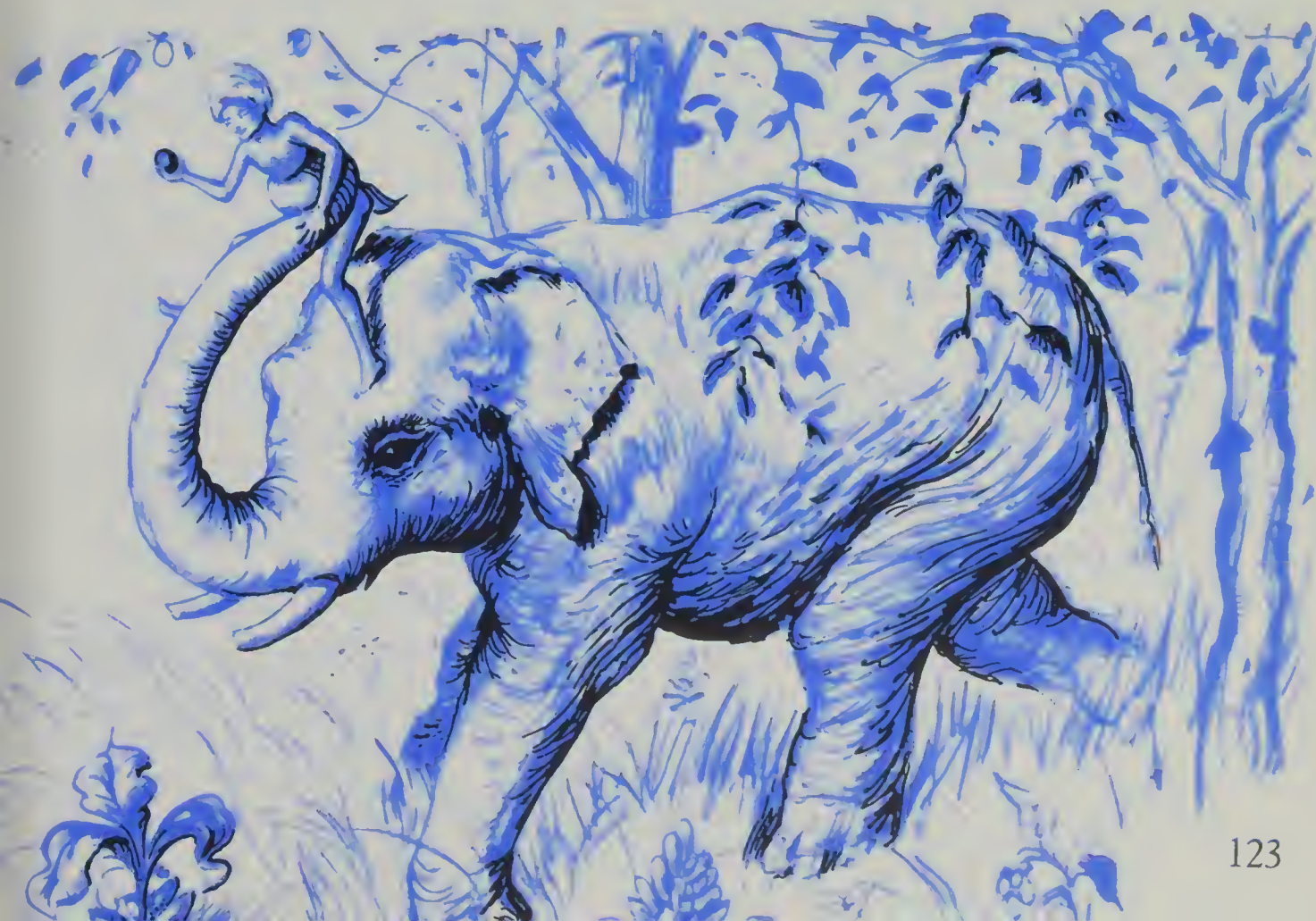
At a wild mango tree they both feasted on the fruit.

"I want that ripe one 'way up there," cried Ahman, pointing.

Dajoo Ban couldn't quite reach it with his trunk. But so well did they understand each other, that when Ahman lifted his arms, the elephant caught him around the waist and lifted him high, so he could pick it himself.

Then, without any command from Ahman, the elephant lowered him onto its great head. It was Dajoo Ban's way of saying, "I've had enough to eat. Where do you want to go?"

Ahman laughed. "Show me some wild animals."

Off they went to the place where the wild buffalo and the rhinoceros lay cooling themselves in the mud. These were beasts that would charge a man or a tiger on sight, but they wanted no part of the mighty bull elephant.

Ahman saw sambar deer feeding on a grassy slope. He saw a black panther slinking towards the rocks like a black shadow. And in the tall grass that grew in the nullah they came suddenly upon terrible fury—the royal tiger. Spitting and growling, the great jungle cat backed off, then fled through the tall grass.

"Who is the real lord of the jungle?" Ahman cried after it.

Dajoo Ban set up a mighty trumpeting, as if to answer the question, and Ahman laughed until his sides hurt.

"In camp I am small and unimportant. But when I am with you, big brother, I feel truly like the prince of all the jungle."

As the sun climbed high in the sky they headed for the river. Suddenly Ahman slid down the gray face of his elephant, caught hold of one of the huge tusks, and dropped to the ground.

"Too slow, big brother. Too slow!"

He was off in a flash, running as hard as he could up the path. With a shrill trumpet of delight Dajoo Ban gave chase, his big ears back, his trunk straight out in front of him. He could easily have caught up with Ahman but for the loose chain hobbles on his legs.

Ahman at last reached the rim of the high bank beside the river and slid down into the water. Behind him came an avalanche as Dajoo Ban followed, for an elephant likes nothing better than sliding down a bank on the seat of his pants.

They swam and played for a while in the water. Then the day grew hot and they found the cool shade of the jungle, where Ahman stretched out on the cool earth and soon fell fast asleep. Almost above him, sleeping in his own way, stood the mighty tusker, swaying gently from side to side as elephants do.

It was almost evening when Ahman slipped quietly into camp. As usual, none had noticed his absence or seemed to care. He learned that no pictures had been taken in camp that day.

"All the men took their cameras into the jungle again," Byoo explained. "They said they were going to take pictures of wild animals."

Two nights later the movie men put up a large white sheet. From one of their large trucks they took a strange looking machine and with it showed the pictures they had taken. All the elephant people were there to watch, and to shout and laugh when they saw themselves on the screen.

"There I am!" shouted Byoo, laughing and slapping his knees.

Though Ahman enjoyed the pictures, he felt a little sad, too. He was useless in camp and even too small to be in pictures.

But suddenly he jerked up very straight and his eyes flew wide open. He was staring at Dajoo Ban in the jungle—and at a boy. And the boy was himself!

Dajoo Ban was lifting him high to pick a ripe mango from the tree. Then the elephant placed him on its head and walked into the deep jungle shadows.

There was also a picture of him running along the path, with the mighty bull chasing him and sliding after him into the water.

"That's the boy I'm looking for," said the director. "Who is he?"

Byoo jumped up. "His name is Ahman. He is here!"

Ahman walked toward the director slowly, too surprised to say anything at all.

"Very good," said the director. He turned to Mr. Linden. "My men just happened to get a couple of telephoto shots of the boy and the elephant the other day. The finest pair I've ever seen. Why didn't you tell us about them?"

Mr. Linden shook his head puzzled. "I didn't know about them myself. Ahman, how long have you and Dajoo Ban been playing together this way?"

Ahman found his tongue. "Two years, maybe a little more."

"So that's it!" Mr. Linden turned to the director. "There's a story for you. Dajoo Ban had always given us trouble until about two years ago. Then suddenly he changed. I've often wondered

just what it was that improved his temper. Now I know. In Ahman he found someone to love."

The director and his assistants all began talking and shouting at the same time. They were going to film the story of Ahman and the big bull elephant, they said, using the pictures they had taken of the camp and the working elephants as background.

Ahman got very mixed up with all the talk about how he would be rich and famous. He could not understand. But he understood very well the glances of Byoo and Kaya and all the elephant people.

Best of all was the moment when Mr. Linden took him by the shoulders and said, "Ahman, I've been wrong about you. You have been serving us well these past two years. I want you and your parents to stay here with us. A boy who loves and understands elephants so well will surely make a fine oozie for us."

Ahman caught his breath. All he could think of for the moment was that he would never, never, never have to leave his friend Dajoo Ban.

But when he thought it all over, later, he knew that he would never have had time to become Dajoo Ban's friend if he'd been big enough to work as a paijaik.

"I'm lucky," he told Byoo. "I'm lucky to be so small."

Christmas With the Indians

Characters

NARRATOR	GUIDE
FIRST WOMAN	BOY
FIRST MAN	SECOND MAN
SECOND WOMAN	FATHER LACOMBE

SOUND: *The faint but audible beat of Indian drums is heard.*

NARRATOR: The night is cold and crisp on our Canadian prairie. The people from the wagon train are huddled close to the campfire. Behind them stand Indian warriors. Their arms are folded. Their faces are impassive. The guide goes forward to stir the fire with his foot. Everyone watches the Indians fearfully. Suddenly a woman speaks, uttering thoughts that have been in all their minds.

FIRST WOMAN: Why don't they kill us now and get it over with?

FIRST MAN: What are they waiting for? They captured us at noon. It must be almost midnight.

SECOND WOMAN: It's the drums that frighten me most. Can't you ask them to stop the drums?

THE GUIDE: It would be like asking the moon to stop lighting the prairie. Besides I can't speak Blackfoot. They wouldn't understand me.

BOY: Mom—I'm hungry.

FIRST WOMAN: Shhhhhhh—we're all hungry.

SECOND MAN:	I don't understand this at all. Back in Quebec City—when I was asking how things were after the Rebellion out here—they tell me—everybody—all the Indians they are peaceful now. So what happens to us? We are quietly eating our dinner on the trail—when boom—these men take us prisoners. I wish, Toinette, we had not started for this great free land of the west we heard so much about.
FIRST MAN:	Harmless men—looking for land to settle. That's all we are. Why would they kill us?
FIRST WOMAN:	Last winter those poor souls at Frog Lake were harmless people too. That didn't stop the massacre.
SECOND WOMAN:	The drums! They're getting louder!
NARRATOR:	As the settlers were talking, more and more Indians appeared out of the darkness. The silent night was filled with strange sounds as the Indians began to dance.
SOUND:	*Tom-toms and chanting UP then FADE.*
FIRST MAN:	Guide, what was that all about?
GUIDE:	I don't know. It might have been a War dance. I don't know. I don't know. It could mean anything—or nothing at all.
FIRST WOMAN:	*(angrily):* In Fort Garry—we hired you to guide us to Fort Edmonton—you said you had been guiding people over the plains for twenty years. Yet now you say you know nothing about the Indians.
GUIDE:	I have made it my business to stay as far away

from them as possible. That is the way to stay alive in this country. Look, Mesdames and Messieurs, could we not cheer ourselves with a song?

SECOND WOMAN: Who feels like singing, when at any moment they may chop us to pieces?

GUIDE: *(gently):* Why live our death before it happens? Besides—there are the children. Come—surely we are forgetting what day this is!

SECOND MAN: Something in December—

GUIDE: Is this not Christmas Eve?

FIRST WOMAN: You're right. *(Wistfully)* Back home in Ontario they will have killed the goose for tomorrow's table.

FIRST MAN: The kitchen will be filled with the warm spiciness of the pudding - - - and fresh bread.

BOY: I'm hungry, Mom.

GUIDE: *(Laughing):* Then let us stop talking of food. When I was a small boy in old Quebec we used to gather in front of our friends' doorsteps and sing.

(He starts to hum more or less to himself, then is joined by the others singing a French-Canadian Christmas Carol.)

1. D'où viens-tu, bergère,
D'où viens-tu? } 2
Je viens de l'étable
De m'y promener;
J'ai vu un miracle
Ce soir arrivé.

1. Whence, O shepherd maiden,
Whence come you? } 2
I come from the stable
Where, this very night,
My eyes have been dazzled
By a wond'rous sight.

2. Qu'as-tu vu, bergère,
Qu'as-tu vu? } 2
J'ai vu dans la crèche
Un petit enfant
Sur la paille fraîche
Mis bien tendrement.

3. Est-il beau, bergère,
Est-il beau? } 2
Plus beau que la lune,
Aussi le soleil;
Jamais dans le monde
On vit son pareil.

4. Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus? } 2
Saint' Marie, sa mère,
Qui lui fait boir' du lait,
Saint Joseph, son père,
Qui tremble de froid.

5. Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus?
Y'a le boeuf et l'âne
Qui sont par devant,
Avec leur haleine
Réchauffent l'enfant.

6. Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus?
Ya trois petits anges
Descendus du ciel
Chantant les louanges
Du Père éternel.

2. What saw you, O maiden,
What saw you? } 2
Right there in the manger,
A little child I saw.
Softly he lay sleeping
On the yellow straw.

3. Was he fair, O maiden,
Was he fair? } 2
Fairer than the moon is,
Fairer than the sun;
Never under heaven
Saw I such a one.

4. Nothing more, O maiden,
Nothing more? } 2
There his mother Mary
Did her babe enfold,
While his father Joseph
Trembled with the cold.

5. Nothing more, O maiden,
Nothing more?
Ox and ass before him
Paid their homage mild;
With their gentle breathing
Warmed the holy child.

6. Nothing more, O maiden,
Nothing more?
Then came three bright angels
From the starry sky,
Singing forth their praises
To the Lord on high.

NARRATOR: While the settlers are singing, a strange figure appears among the Indians and moves slowly toward the campfire. He is dressed in the robes of a priest but his robes are worn and badly torn and his feet are bare. In his hands he carries a strange flag. It is a red cross on a white background. The little boy is the first to notice him.

BOY: Who's that?

FIRST WOMAN: Save us. Save us, Father.

FATHER LACOMBE: *(gently):* Rise, my child, rise. Come, what ails you?

FIRST MAN: Who are you? Are you their prisoner too?

FATHER LACOMBE: Me? A prisoner? *(Laughs)* Forgive an old man his conceit. I see I am not as well known as I had thought.

GUIDE: You are Father Lacombe. I have heard of you—and the red cross you carry. I saw you once—for a moment—from the distance. You called to our canoe from the riverbank—asking us to take a message to Fort Edmonton. It was the Fall of the Smallpox.

FATHER LACOMBE: *(sighs):* A bitter time it was for my people.

GUIDE: You are a long way from your Mission at St. Albert.

FATHER LACOMBE: The Blackfoot wander far these days looking for the buffalo herds. *(sighs)* I fear the easy days of the hunt are past. A good shepherd follows his flock—and I follow mine. But come—why such sad faces? I have been with

the hunters all day—and we brought back plenty of meat.

SECOND MAN: Guide, this is all beyond me. Is this a fellow prisoner—or a madman?

FATHER LACOMBE: A madman? Me?

GUIDE: *(grinning):* Sorry Father. I had better explain. We did not know—we could not guess you were near. Today at our noon break on the trail—some of your people surrounded us and have kept us here as prisoners.

FATHER LACOMBE: *(shocked):* Prisoners! You are prisoners? No —wait *(laughs)* I believe I know the explanation. The whole thing is my fault.

SECOND WOMAN: Your fault, Father?

FATHER LACOMBE: Yes. They must have misunderstood me. You see I told them of how we celebrate Christmas in the old world by inviting all the people to the lodge of the chief for a great celebration and feast. They took me too literally and brought you whether you wished to come or not. Do not worry—you are their guests.

FIRST MAN: *(angrily):* But why didn't they tell us that this was what they wanted?

FATHER LACOMBE: They speak no language save their own.

FIRST MAN: Then they'd better learn—because there's plenty more settlers like us coming West.

FIRST WOMAN: Scaring us half to death—just a pack of ignorant savages.

FATHER LACOMBE: *(softly):* My children—you are overlooking something. This is their land; their birthright. It would be more Christian if you were to learn their tongue. They may be ignorant—they may be savage—but they have made a small start towards learning. Listen!

SOUND: *Huron Christmas carol. First verse. Tom-tom accompaniment.*

'Twas in the moon of winter time when all the birds had fled
That Mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel-choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim
And wand'ring hunters heard the hymn;
"Jesus, your King is born,
Jesus is born;
In Excelsis Gloria!"

FATHER LACOMBE: You see. They are telling you the Christmas story in the way they understand it best. They did not mean to frighten you. They wanted you to share what little they have.

SECOND WOMAN: We are sorry, Father. We spoke through fear. Would it—would it be all right if we went into their camp now to show them that we understand and are grateful?

FATHER LACOMBE: Of course, my child. Ah—the stars tell me it is midnight. Merry Christmas—everyone.

SOUND: *Huron carol. Fade to drums. Drums fade.*

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found.
A ragged robe of rabbit-skin enwrapped His beauty 'round;
And, as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high;
"Jesus, your King is born,
Jesus is born;
In Excelsis Gloria!"

The earliest moon of winter time is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless Infant there,
While Chiefs from far before Him knelt
With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
"Jesus, your King is born,
Jesus is born;
In Excelsis Gloria!"

O children of the forest free, O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and heav'n is born to-day for you.
Come, kneel before the radiant Boy
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
"Jesus, your King is born,
Jesus is born;
In Excelsis Gloria!"

The Big Green Umbrella

Mr. Thomas Thomas had an umbrella. It was a very fine umbrella, made of dark green silk, with an ivory tip and a round ivory handle.

Mr. Thomas's umbrella was a very large umbrella. It was really like a small silk roof. It would keep Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Thomas and young Tom and little Amanda all dry on a rainy day. At least if the rain came down straight, they would be dry.

On rainy days the whole family walked together, under Mr. Thomas's big green umbrella. The umbrella would keep them dry, going to church, or going down the street under the rows of elm trees, past the little red brick houses with their small-paned windows.

People looking out from upstairs windows would say, "There goes Mr. Thomas's big green umbrella!"

Everyone knew it. There were many big umbrellas in town, but Mr. Thomas's was the biggest, the greenest, and the silkiest.

He was very proud of it, and so were Mrs. Thomas and Tom and Amanda.

But one day the umbrella seemed to grow tired of its life in town. It grew tired of keeping the rain off the Thomases on rainy days, and on sunny days standing in the dark corner behind the door. It had heard the talk of the winds from far away. It had listened to the whispering of raindrops which had seen all the world at one time or another. Goodness knows what thoughts the umbrella had been thinking during all the long hours behind the door! But when the moment came, the umbrella acted.

It was a Saturday morning in April. The wind blew fresh, the clouds raced overhead, the sun shone brightly when it shone at all. The birds sat among the budding trees and sang for joy, though sometimes they had to stop their singing when a sudden flurry of

wind almost blew their tails inside out. It was a wild day, but a lovely day. The dogs barked, the little boys flew their plunging kites. The horses clattering over the cobbled streets threw up their heads at the blowing bits of paper, and the Thomas family went for a walk. Mr. Thomas took the umbrella along, because in April a shower may come up at any minute.

When people went for a walk, they always went to the river, whose wide waters ran along the back of the gardens of the red brick houses on its banks. There were always things to be seen on the river, a flock of wild ducks bobbing about, or fishermen in their small boats. Or it might be a big clipper ship with its white sails spread, sailing down the river for South America, or the ports of Russia, or faraway China.

On this April morning, such a ship was standing off the shore, its sails set.

"She's from the Port of London," Mr. Thomas remarked, "probably bound for the Pagoda Anchorage."

"I wish I were on her," said Tom.

"So do I," said little Amanda.

"Pooh, you'd be sick!" cried Tom.

"No more than you!" cried Amanda.

"Hush, children," said gentle Mrs. Thomas, "see, it's beginning to rain."

Yes, the clouds had suddenly gathered. A minute ago the sun was shining, and now the rain was falling!

Mr. Thomas put up the big green silk umbrella, and all the Thomases gathered under it like chickens under a bush when the rain begins. Had the umbrella heard what the children said? Who will ever know?

Suddenly an unexpected gust of wind arose, stronger than any of the others. It pushed its way under the green umbrella. Umbrella and wind together struggled to pull the ivory handle out of Mr. Thomas's grasp. They tugged, they jerked, they plunged.

Mrs. Thomas smothered a scream, the children knocked against Mr. Thomas's elbows, the umbrella, like a thing gone mad, whacked against Mr. Thomas's fine beaver hat and sent it spinning. As Mr. Thomas reached one hand out to catch his hat, the umbrella gave a wicked twist—and it was free with its friend the wind.

Above the meadow the umbrella went, now near the ground, now high in the air, like a big green flower, like a tumbling toadstool. Now it floated like a jellyfish, now it soared upward like a kite, now it turned head-over-heels like a boy at play.

It was over the river now, frightening a flock of ducks which flew up quacking and spattering water.

The rain had stopped already. The sun was out again. In a row the Thomases stood and watched the great green umbrella, which had been their pride, dancing and bowing above the river. Sometimes they couldn't see it and then they would catch a glimpse of it again, dark against the white sails of the clipper ship, which it seemed to be approaching. Then they saw it no more.

"If only my hat hadn't blown off!" sighed Mr. Thomas. "I might have held it."

"No one could have held that big umbrella in such a wind," soothed Mrs. Thomas.

"We'll never have another umbrella like that," whimpered Amanda.

"There's not another umbrella like it in the world," said young Tom solemnly.

"The wind's gone down," said Mr. Thomas, "I suppose our umbrella's in the river by now."

"It will float for a while," murmured Mrs. Thomas, "and then it will sink."

"And scare the fishes," Tom suggested.

"Perhaps it will keep the sunshine off the fishes as it used to keep the rain off us," said Amanda.

"Anyhow, it's at the bottom of the river by now," said Mr. Thomas. "I'm sorry, for it was a fine umbrella. We'll never see it again."

Mr. Thomas was an upright man, a deacon in the church, a kind husband, and an understanding father. He set the children a splendid example by never making a remark unless he was sure he was right.

But on this fine blowy April Saturday morning Mr. Thomas was wrong as wrong could be. The umbrella was not at the bottom of the river, nor even at the top of it among the waves. And he was mistaken in other ways besides.

Captain John De Witt, of the clipper ship *Eagle,* was walking the deck on this fine April morning. He was thinking what a fine ship his was, and what a good crew he had signed on, and how well the first mate was handling the business of sailing the vessel down the river.

Off for China! He would sail halfway round the world and

trade with the Chinese, fill the hold with sweet-smelling tea and buy fine cups and silk shawls for his sister. Surely that was a fine kind of voyage to make.

Suddenly, something caught his eye; it bobbed and winked at the captain.

"That's a funny bird," he thought. But his sharp sailor's eyes told him immediately that it was not a bird.

"A kite?" But it hadn't a kite's shape. Dancing, leaping, tumbling, the thing approached nearer.

"An umbrella!" exclaimed the captain and laughed. The umbrella seemed to be on a frolic, so full of high spirits that it couldn't behave the same way for two seconds on end. Now it appeared about to leap into the river, now it changed its course, to skim over the masts. At the last moment it did neither, but with a final tumble, landed in the rigging and stuck.

Now a sailor was scrambling up to where the umbrella rested. The thing heaved and moved. It seemed to be asking the wind not to press it against the ropes but to let it go again to play about in the air. But the wind was a joker, too, turning the umbrella around just as the sailor's brown hand reached for it. Now he had the handle. Now he was working his fingers up to the catch. Now the umbrella had suddenly ceased to be a great green toadstool; it was furled and helpless, only a stick in petticoats.

The sailor brought the closed umbrella to the captain, who examined it.

"A very fine umbrella and not a bit the worse for its cruise," he said. "I'll put it in my cabin and show the Chinese what a good umbrella looks like."

Although the umbrella stood for long weeks behind the cabin door, it was not like standing in the hallway of a house. The air smelled of salt and tarry ropes. The umbrella heard the creaking of the masts and the whistle of wind. It moved up and down, up and down with the motion of the vessel. Although nothing could

be seen from the corner of the cabin behind the door, a great deal could be heard and imagined.

Land air has a different smell; first come the sea-birds on the borders of the ocean, and then one hears the land birds singing and twittering. The *Eagle* moved smoothly now on a quiet river. There were cries of men, unlike the sounds of English voices, and smells of gardens and spices and dead fish.

When the *Eagle* came to anchor there were temple bells, too, in the distance, and Chinese voices conferring with Captain De Witt in the cabin. But still nothing to be seen.

Then one day it rained, slats of rain falling on the cabin roof like a bamboo curtain falling with a sharp sound, and that day the great green umbrella with the ivory handle came out of its hiding and saw China.

If I should tell you all that the umbrella saw, I should have to tell you all about China, for it saw everything. It saw the blue-clothed crowds, with pigtails hanging down their backs, the women with bound feet in little embroidered slippers, the children in bright clothes. It saw the river boats with big eyes painted on each side of the prows, the dark temples opening on streets so narrow that the umbrella touched walls on each side.

Indeed the streets were so very narrow and the green umbrella was so very large that hundreds of Chinese had to pass under it as it moved along.

The trader who was in charge of loading the *Eagle* looked at the umbrella with interest and admiration.

"A fine umbrella," he said in Chinese.

"A very fine umbrella," he repeated in English.

"It is yours," declared Captain De Witt, for the captain and the trader were always giving each other presents.

So that afternoon the umbrella started off with a slim yellow hand on its ivory handle, and a grave Chinese face like an old idol's in its green shade.

When the merchant reached his home, he went directly into the part of his house where the women of the family lived, to show them the new umbrella, for the women liked to see things which came from across the sea. They were used to smaller parasols made of paper. They laughed and stared at the great big umbrella as large as a little house.

Peach Blossom, the trader's youngest daughter, was more interested than anyone else. "It is so curious," she exclaimed, "I have never seen such a thing."

The trader smiled at her. "It is yours," he said, "but you must have one of the servants hold it for you when it rains. It is too large for your little hands."

So the umbrella became Peach Blossom's. It went out into the garden in the courtyard to keep her dry when it rained. A big country woman held it, while Peach Blossom pattered along on her tiny feet, with food for the goldfish in the rain-speckled pond under the moon-shaped bridge. More rarely it took her to a temple or to visit at some other house where her cousins lived. Then all the children crowded under the umbrella and laughed because they had seen nothing like it before.

A month went by, and one afternoon the trader noticed that Peach Blossom was looking more thoughtful than usual.

"What are you thinking about, Peach Blossom?" he asked.

"I had a dream last night, my father," Peach Blossom replied, bowing.

"Tell me," he said.

Again Peach Blossom bowed. "I dreamed," she went on, "I was walking out in the rain, holding the strange umbrella in my hand. And I heard it sigh and I looked up. It seemed then that it was a huge bird which was struggling to get away. But I was not afraid.

"Why do you sigh?" I asked, and it replied, "I am weary for my own place and my own people."

"Then I looked again and it seemed to be only the strange umbrella. But this morning when Green Bamboo held it over me during a shower, it tugged and struggled so that she could hardly hold it." The trader nodded slowly. "It is homesick," he said. "Things can no doubt be homesick too. I will take it back to the Captain and explain. If it stayed here it would not be lucky. Fortunately, the *Eagle* has not yet sailed."

So that was how it came about that the big green umbrella found itself once more behind the door in the captain's cabin. Once more it smelled and heard and felt the life of a ship, leaving the port for the open sea. Once more it shared in the life of a long voyage, heard the talk and felt the rise and fall of the vessel beneath it. Once more it came through storms and calms to the quiet of a great river, but this time the odours that blew from the land, and the far-off sounds of the shores were as well known as sun and rain to the umbrella.

Then once more the ship came up into the wind. The anchor chains rattled and the captain's gig was lowered. The captain and the umbrella were rowed ashore across the ripples of the river.

At the dock, the customs officer bowed politely to Captain

De Witt. "I trust that you had a good voyage to China, sir. Are you putting any goods ashore this trip?"

Captain De Witt laughed. "Only this stowaway which signed on from here without papers." And he held out the big green umbrella.

"By thunder, sir, that's Mr. Thomas's umbrella which blew away over a year ago. It was the biggest umbrella in town. I am sure that he never expected to lay eyes on that again."

So the captain explained how the umbrella had chosen to come aboard and the customs officer laughed and nodded, and called a boy.

"Here, Jim, take this to Mr. Thomas's house and tell him that it went on a voyage to China along with Captain De Witt on the *Eagle*. In China, it was given to a little Chinese girl who had a dream and sent it back because she thought the umbrella was homesick. Amanda will like to hear that."

"Tell Amanda that the little girl's name was Peach Blossom and that she was eight years old," Captain De Witt joined in.

"That's about Amanda's age," said the customs officer, "or almost. Children keep changing their ages so fast, I can't keep track of them."

The boy, Jim, started up the street under the trees, whistling and swinging the big green umbrella by the ivory handle. It was so tall he had to keep his hand above his shoulder so the ivory tip wouldn't hit the paving stones.

"What have you got there, Jim?" one of his friends asked him. "Look out or it will run away with you."

"That's Mr. Thomas's green umbrella and it's been on a voyage to China," Jim explained.

"Whew!" said the boy falling in beside Jim, "What do you know about that?"

Just then a lady who was passing stopped, looking sharply at

the umbrella. "Isn't that Mr. Thomas's big green umbrella?" she demanded. "What are you doing with it, boy?"

When she heard the story, she nodded her head a couple of times.

"I'll go along to see that you don't break it," she declared. "I do want to see Mrs. Thomas's face when she comes to the door. I've seen that umbrella too many times to be mistaken about it."

So the umbrella went on its happy way, and more and more people joined in the parade. There were children and dogs, of course, and grown-up people, too, just to see what the Thomases would say when they saw their big green umbrella returned from faraway China.

Jim knocked on the big shiny knocker on the white door, and the maid came and was soon followed by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and young Tom and little Amanda, pouring out onto the steps to see the big green umbrella. Mr. Thomas opened it, and there it was, as big and sheltering as ever and not a tear or wear in all its dark green surface.

Mrs. Thomas kept repeating, "Well, I never in all my born days!"

Young Tom grinned and went out into the street to see the *Eagle* standing offshore, sails set for other ports.

But Amanda went over when no one was looking and kissed the handle of the runaway umbrella to welcome it home.

It was she who found, fastened below the ivory handle, a coloured cord from which hung a silken peach with a tassel at its end. It was filled with sandalwood as a reminder of its journey.

But Peach Blossom must have been right. It seemed as if the umbrella wanted to stay home. There it lived in great style as the umbrella which had been to China; yes, and had come back again.

The Sign Of Pegasus

As Peter and Anastasia listened to Uncle Theo they could imagine a white horse with feathered wings, soaring through the blue sky.

"Where did Pegasus go when he flew away forever?" asked Anastasia.

"Back to the gods, I suppose," said Uncle Theo. He had just told the children the old Greek myth about Pegasus, the winged horse, and his human master, Bellerophon, who had many adventures together until Bellerophon angered the gods, and Pegasus was taken from him.

"Didn't anyone on earth ever see Pegasus again?" Peter wanted to know.

"That I cannot say," replied Uncle Theo.

"Did Pegasus have any children?" asked Anastasia.

Uncle Theo looked surprised. "Perhaps. I do not know."

"A little colt with wings maybe," said Anastasia hopefully.

Uncle Theo shook his head. "I wouldn't count on it. Even if there was a colt its mother was probably an earth horse, so the colt may not have had wings."

"But maybe he did," persisted Anastasia.

"Look," said Peter, getting excited, "maybe there are some horses alive today who are his great-great grandchildren." He stopped. "Well, I suppose not, but I wish there were, and I wish we could find one."

Uncle Theo sighed. "In this world you never know what you can find until you look for it."

"I guess we would have to go to Greece to find one, though," said Anastasia.

"Why?" asked Peter. "Our grandfather came over to America from Greece and so did lots of other people. Maybe some horses came, too."

"Ah, yes, indeed," murmured Uncle Theo, suddenly looking quite worn out.

Peter and Anastasia got up to go.

"Don't forget you're coming to our house for dinner tonight," said Anastasia as she galloped out the door of Uncle Theo's little cottage. She tossed her black curls like a mane.

In his mind Peter was flying, too. He sailed among clouds on the back of a winged horse, swooped around a mountain and landed lightly in the meadow beside a fountain. Then a loud whinny and the sound of hoofs made him jump. It wasn't in his mind, either.

"Ana, did you hear that?"

With a rumble of wheels, a white horse pulling a blue cart came into sight around the corner. The cart was piled high with baskets of apples. On the seat, holding the reins was a little woman, wearing a straw hat and a sweater.

"Apples for sale! Fresh apples from the farm!" The woman looked at them and smiled. Her face was like an apple, too—a rosy, slightly wrinkled one.

Peter and Anastasia stared at each other. Then they turned and walked along after the cart.

"Apples for sale!" The woman stopped at a house and went

up to the door. Peter and Anastasia stepped closer to the horse. Its nostrils were pink, its eyes deep and dark as if it knew a secret, and its mane shone like milkweed. Peter found himself looking for a pair of wings folded neatly under the harness, but of course nothing was there.

The woman came back from the house. "So you like my horse, do you?" She held out three apples. "One for each of you, and here lad, feed this one to Peg. She dearly loves apples."

"Peg!" gulped Peter, nearly dropping the apples. "Is that her name?"

"Yes, named for a friend of mine—Margaret, of course. But Peg for short."

After a meaningful look at Peter, Anastasia asked: "Could you tell us, please, where you got Peg?"

"I bought her from a farmer," replied the woman. "Pretty, isn't she?" Peg ate her apple and the cart moved on.

"She's really just a white horse," Peter said to Anastasia as they followed. "No wings or anything."

"I know," agreed Anastasia. "But wouldn't it be wonderful if she did have wings!"

The woman sold apples at many houses. Finally Peter and Anastasia found themselves near their own home on the edge of town.

"Look, there's Uncle Theo," said Peter. "It must be nearly time for dinner; he's going to our house."

They called "Goodbye" to the woman. As they joined Uncle Theo he said, "That is Mrs. Hale. She bought the old Applegate farm last spring."

Peter and Anastasia saw Mrs. Hale selling apples several times after that. Then she stopped coming. They did not see her for nearly three weeks. "I wonder if there is something wrong," worried Anastasia.

"Maybe it's just that her apples are gone," said Peter.

"But it's still apple time," protested Anastasia, "and Uncle Theo says there is a big orchard out at Applegate Farm."

"Well, anyway," said Peter, picking up his bat, "I'm going to play baseball."

"Listen!" exclaimed Anastasia. A voice in the distance was crying: "Apples! Apples for sale!"

They hurried to meet the cart coming down the street. Mrs. Hale's face seemed paler than usual, but she smiled when she saw them and said, "Hello." Peg stopped and whinnied, as if she were trying to tell them something.

A woman called out of a house: "Glad you came, Mrs. Hale. I'll get my purse."

Mrs. Hale stepped down carefully from the cart. On her left ankle was a bandage.

"Oh, you've hurt yourself!" cried Anastasia.

"Slipped on an apple peeling and tore a ligament," explained Mrs. Hale.

"How can you walk on it?" asked Peter.

"I couldn't at first," she replied, "but I manage now."

Peter and Anastasia looked at each other. They knew that Mrs. Hale's ankle was not well yet.

"The pickers came and picked my apples and I hired a man to sell them at the store when I couldn't get around," Mrs. Hale went on. "He told me he'd go out with the cart today, but now he's sick, so I thought I'd try it myself."

"We'll help you," said Peter.

Mrs. Hale smiled. "You're like the good fairies."

"I thought you were going to play baseball," whispered Anastasia to Peter later as they carried a basket of apples between them to a house.

"I was," said Peter, "but I can do that some other time."

They worked hard helping Mrs. Hale, and after a while they began to feel tired.

"Now if Peg had wings she could fly us around," said Anastasia to Peter.

"She's a good horse, even if she doesn't have wings," remarked Peter. "I wish we had a horse of our own."

Peg turned toward them and gave a soft whinny, closed one eye and opened it again.

"She winked at us!" gasped Anastasia.

Peg merely lowered her head and plodded along the street.

At last the apples were all gone. Mrs. Hale held out a dollar bill for each of them. "You've been such a help to me!"

Peter shook his head. "We don't want any money, Mrs. Hale. We did it because we wanted to."

"Well, now, that's very kind," said Mrs. Hale. "But how can I repay you? I know; when this old foot of mine gets well I'll bake you an apple pie. Why don't you get in and come out with me and see my orchard? It's only half a mile."

Peter and Anastasia did not need to be urged. They climbed quickly into the cart.

"Greetings!" came a voice. It was Uncle Theo. They had been so busy talking that they hadn't noticed him standing there.

"I intended to buy a basket of apples," declared Uncle Theo, "but I'm afraid there are none left."

"Oh, what a shame!" said Mrs. Hale. "I have more at the farm. Would you like to come out with us and get some?"

Uncle Theo looked at the cart, at Peg, and at the three of them. "There is no room for me," he said sadly. "I shall follow you later in my car."

"Very good then," agreed Mrs. Hale. She clucked to Peg and off they went to Applegate Farm.

The orchard was clustered behind the old grey farm house. Inside the barn were baskets of red and yellow apples. A delightful smell hung in the air.

Peter and Anastasia helped Mrs. Hale unharness Peg, who whinnied longingly.

"There, there, Peg, you'll soon be in your nice green pasture," soothed Mrs. Hale, sitting down on a box beside the apples. "My dears, will you take Peg out and undo the gate? It's back of the barn."

Peg whinnied again and as they followed her around the barn door Peter thought he heard an answering noise.

Mrs. Hale called after them: "I think Peg wants to show you something."

"Look!" cried Anastasia.

Across the pasture a cream-coloured colt came galloping, almost as if it were flying through the air. In a dream Peter and Anastasia opened the gate. They stood there, watching, while Peg and the colt touched noses.

"He looks just like a winged horse should look," said Peter softly.

And Anastasia said, "Peter, don't you wish he was ours?"

A horn blared. That was Uncle Theo driving into Mrs. Hale's yard. They ran back to the barn. "Uncle Theo! Uncle Theo! Peg has a colt!" called Anastasia.

Peter asked quietly, "Mrs. Hale, would you sell us Peg's colt?"

Mrs. Hale was surprised. "The colt, my dears?" She looked at Uncle Theo, who raised his eyebrows.

"We can run errands and save our allowances," bubbled Anastasia. "And people always give us money for Christmas and birthdays and—"

"We have a big yard at the end of town to keep a horse in," went on Peter. Mrs. Hale smiled. "Well, now, that's fine. If you really want him I'll sell him to no one else when he's old enough. But it depends on what your folks say."

Uncle Theo cleared his throat. "May I see this favoured animal? If he makes an impression upon me perhaps I can help persuade the children's parents."

"Of course, show your uncle," said Mrs. Hale. "I'll wait here."

"Oh, thank you everybody!" cried Anastasia. They hurried Uncle Theo to the pasture. The colt came running toward them, shining pale gold in the sun like a horse of the Greece of long ago. Peter and Anastasia stroked his nose over the gate.

And then suddenly Peter's heart gave a leap and started to pound. For there, on the colt's shoulders—He could hardly believe it!

"Do you see?" he nudged Anastasia.

Her eyes were round with wonder as she nodded.

"It's a sign," said Peter.

"A nice little creature," Uncle Theo was saying. "I shall put in a good word with your parents."

"Uncle Theo," said Peter, "I guess we'd better tell you. This

colt is something special. He might even be the great-great grandson—I mean, a descendant—of Pegasus."

"Pegasus!" exclaimed Uncle Theo.

"Yes," said Anastasia. "You know. We were talking about it at your house."

"Look," directed Peter. "There on his back—the sign."

On the colt's shoulders were two wavy lines where the hair grew unevenly, overlapped and zigzagged, as if wings had been there in the dim, dim past, or even more exciting, as if wings might grow in the very near future.

Uncle Theo stared. A strange expression came over his face.

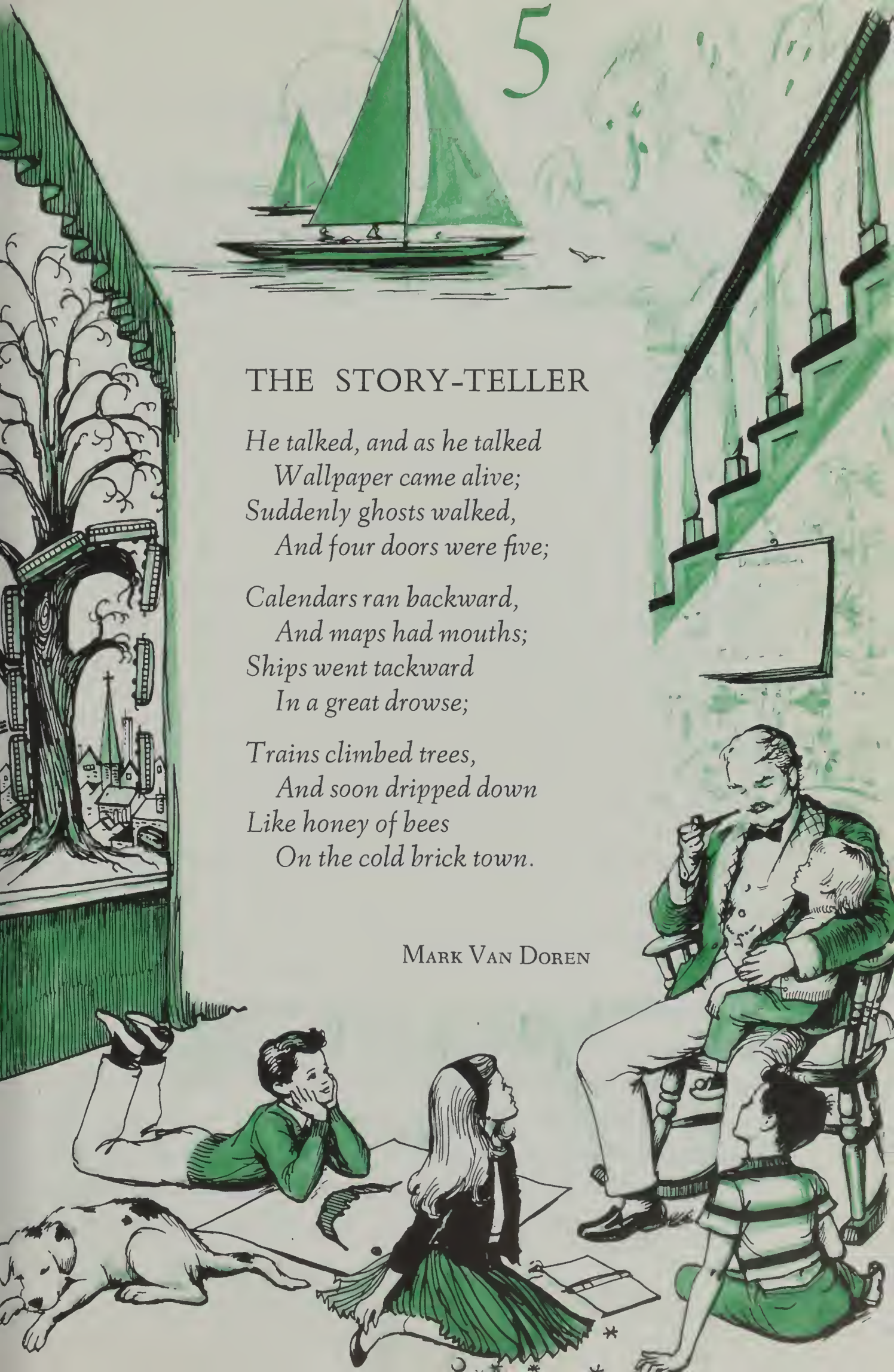
"It's just like you told us, Uncle Theo," said Peter. "You never know what you can find until you look for it."

THE STORY-TELLER

He talked, and as he talked
Wallpaper came alive;
Suddenly ghosts walked,
And four doors were five;

Calendars ran backward,
And maps had mouths;
Ships went tackward
In a great drowse;

Trains climbed trees,
And soon dripped down
Like honey of bees
On the cold brick town.

MARK VAN DOREN

The Teacup Whale

One day early in spring David was going along the road, splish, splash, squish, squash. In spring when the snow has melted, the road is very muddy. David came to a big puddle in the middle of the road. He had to walk around it because it was too big to jump over. Walking around took longer than jumping, so David got interested in the puddle on the way around, and he stopped to look in. He saw pebbles and he saw bubbles and he saw mud. He saw some sticks floating and he saw an early angle-worm coming out for a springtime walk around the edge of the puddle. He saw a tiny river running in one end of the puddle and another tiny river running out the other end, made of wheel-tracks in the muddy road.

Then all of a sudden he saw a little black SOMETHING in the middle of the puddle. It wiggled. It blew a little tiny fountain. Then it went down out of sight under the muddy water. David crouched down to see better and leaned over so far he almost fell in. For a minute all he could see in the puddle was himself, as if he were looking into a mirror, and the white clouds overhead in the blue sky. Then the little tiny black thing came up to the top of the water and flopped its little tiny black tail—kersplash!

"Why, my goodness gracious me!' said David with his eyes bulging out. "It's a WHALE!"

He had a map of Nantucket on the wall beside his bed at home, with a picture of a whale on it. He knew exactly what a whale was like, from the spout that came out of his blowhole to the flukes of his spreading tail fully an inch away.

David luckily had his little tin bucket with him. He hardly ever went out without his little red tin bucket, it was so very useful for carrying all sorts of things home. This time he worked hard and splashed and puffed and caught the whale in his hands and put

it in the bucket with enough water to swim in, and he carried it home.

The bucket was quite deep and dark for such a tiny whale, and you couldn't see him very well, so David went and climbed on a chair, and reached on the shelf, and got a white teacup and filled it with water before he put in the whale. The whale showed up very black and shiny and handsome in the nice white teacup. Then he carried it to his mother.

"Whatever have you got there?" asked David's mother. "Another polliwog?"

"No," said David, "that is a whale."

"Nonsense," said his mother. "Whales are enormous."

"What is a nor-mouse?" asked David.

"Whales are," said his mother; it didn't make sense, but then very few things did. She went on: "It means very big indeed. Bigger than a horse. Bigger than a car. Bigger than an elephant. Whales are enormous. But what a VERY funny polliwog this is!"

Every day the whale grew. David fed him bits of chopped meat and he got bigger and bigger and he got stronger and stronger. One morning when David came down to breakfast the teacup was smashed into bits and the whale lay flopping in the saucer in a few drops of water. He had grown too big and too strong for the little white teacup. So David went to the kitchen and got a strong yellow bowl, the kind they mix ginger cookies in. The whale swam in that and it fitted him nicely. He went round and round and round to the left side and admired the scenery, and then he turned and went round and round and round to the right side and admired the scenery. He never seemed to get tired of doing it. For a good many days the whale swam in the yellow mixing bowl. But he was growing all the time. He ate boiled rice—at first ten grains a day and then more and more. He got bigger and bigger and he got stronger and stronger. One day he gave a JUMP, and landed on the floor. He was too big for the yellow bowl.

David sat down and put his elbows on his knees and put his chin in his hands. That was to make thinking easier. Then he thought what to do. The watering can was too small. The soup kettle was too small. The brass fruit bowl was too small. The wash basin was too small, and besides, they couldn't wash their hands if there was a whale in it. So he asked his mother if he could borrow the wash boiler. She said yes, if he would be careful of it. So the whale lived in the wash boiler. All the time he was getting bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger, and the little fountains he blew through the blowhole in the top of his head were were getting bigger too, and he couldn't turn around.

"I do declare," said David's mother, "I never in all my born days saw a polliwog blow fountains through the top of his head! What a VERY funny polliwog!"

The whale lived in the wash boiler about a week. He knocked over the wash boiler one day and made a big puddle on the floor. So David had to move him again. He thought and thought. There wasn't any place in the house now big enough for the whale to turn around in but the bathtub. So David moved the whale into the bathtub. By this time he was about as big as a big cat or a smallish dog, and a very pretty shining black, like patent leather shoes. He was getting so tame that he used to come swimming up to the top of the water and blow a fountain whenever David whistled for him.

But you can see that it wasn't very convenient to keep the whale in the bathtub, because whenever anybody wanted to take a bath,

they had to bring the dishpan up from the kitchen to put the whale into, and it was hard to keep him from jumping out of the dishpan. He was so impatient to get back into the big tub where he could swim around in comfort, he simply wouldn't lie still long enough for anyone to take a bath. And every day the whale grew. By this time he was eating leftover tea biscuits, toast and vegetables. He got bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger. At last one day David's mother said, "I simply cannot and will not be bothered lifting out this great big clumsy heavy polliwog every time anyone in this house takes a bath!"

So David and his father got into the car and they drove down the hill to the Village. They went past the Grocery Store and the Butcher Store and the Drugstore and the Post Office and the Railroad Station till they came to Mister Barlow's Hardware Store.

"Good morning, Mister Barlow," said David.

"Good morning, David, fine weather we're having and what can I do for you this fine morning?" said Mister Barlow.

"I have a whale which is growing very fast," said David, "and I must have a tank to keep him in. Perhaps you keep tanks in your store?"

"Yes, indeed," said Mister Barlow proudly, and showed him several tanks. But they were goldfish tanks.

"Oh, dear no," said David, "these aren't NEARLY big enough! Show me some bigger tanks, please."

But Mister Barlow didn't have any bigger tanks. David had to order one made four times as big as the bathtub and twice as deep and all lined with tin to make it water-tight.

In two or three days the tank was finished and Mister Barlow brought it up to David's house. They put it in the garden right beside the porch so they could watch the whale easily, and they filled it with water. It was summertime now, so the whale enjoyed living in the garden. He grew very fast from being out in the sun. He got bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger. Pretty soon he got as big as a pony.

All the children in the neighbourhood used to come to visit David's whale. They got sardines at the Grocery Store and threw them to the whale one at a time for a treat. They brought the whale ice cream cones, because whales come from polar regions and they thought he must miss the icebergs. But the whale didn't like ice cream, which melted and made the water horrid and cloudy; so the children took turns changing the water in the tank, with the garden hose.

One day some visitors came a long way to see the whale. There was Mister Queebus and Missis Queebus and their little boy Alexander. They came in their car all the way from Woodstock, ninety miles away, and they were all dressed up in their Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes. They stood in a row on the porch and looked down on the whale in the tank, and admired him. The whale was so pleased with all this admiration that he blew an especially splendid fountain in honour of the Queebus family, when David whistled. It was his only way of thanking them. But now he was so big that his fountain was like the smoke that you see coming out of the smoke-stack of a locomotive, when you sit in the car at the railroad crossing gates and watch the express go roaring by. So the fountain blew all over the Queebus family, and their best visiting clothes got soaking wet and it made them very cross. David's mother said, "REALLY

we can't keep that ridiculous polliwog of David's any longer. It's MUCH too big. And I don't believe it will ever be a frog anyway!"

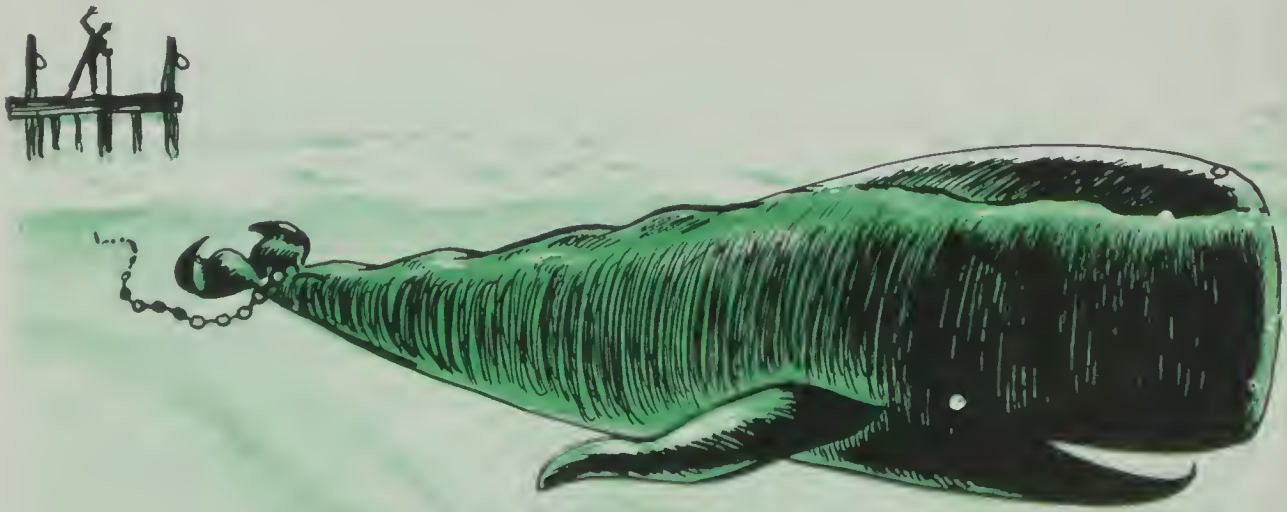
David was getting quite tired of changing the water in the big tank with the garden hose every few days, and of running around the Village with his red bucket collecting bread and scraps from all the neighbours to feed the hungry whale, who ate a great deal. And the whale was growing all the time. Day by day he was getting bigger and he was getting stronger.

So David telephoned to Tony, the Express Man, to bring up his truck. And he telephoned to Nick, the Garage Man, to bring his wrecking car, and all together they hoisted the whale onto the truck by means of the derrick on the wrecking car. They pinned wet bath towels around his head to keep him from drying out on the ride.

David climbed up on the driver's seat beside Tony the Express Man and they went down the hill to the Village. They went past the Grocery Store and past the Butcher Store and past the Drugstore and past the Post Office and past the Railroad Station till they came to Mister Barlow's Hardware Store. There David bought a very long strong chain, and then they drove the whale down to the wharf that stuck out into the river. They hooked the whale to the wharf with the chain around his tail because he hadn't any neck, and David promised to come down every day to visit him.

Every day David's father drove him down to the wharf and David whistled to his whale. The whale came up close alongside the wharf and blew lovely fountains for David. He was a very happy and comfortable whale, swimming around the wharf and eating fresh fish right out of the river, and sleeping under the wharf at night like a dog in his kennel. He was a great pet with all the people in the Village. The Grocer brought his three little boys to see him, and the Butcher brought his little girl, and the Postman brought his twins, and the old Station Agent who sold railroad tickets for train rides brought his little golden-haired grandchild.

They all admired the whale and some of them brought him sardines out of a can. But catching fresh fish out of the river had spoiled the whale for sardines out of a can, and he would spit them out for the crabs and fish to eat.

People used to come out from the City on Sundays just to see David's whale. The man who owned the wharf was planning to charge ten cents admission from everyone, to pay him for his trouble. But David couldn't see what trouble the man had; David took care of the whale, David had tied him up, and David had collected food for him in his bucket all the while he was growing! But all the time the whale was getting stronger and stronger.

One morning David went down to the wharf to visit the whale as usual. He whistled and whistled for the whale. But the whale didn't come to blow him a fountain. Then David noticed that the wharf was all broken at the end; planks were ripped apart, and the big heavy piles were pulled sidewise.

The whale had broken the wharf in the night. He had broken loose and had swum majestically down the river to the sea, a mighty full-grown whale, towing a piece of chain behind him.

David went home and told his mother the whale had gone, and his mother said, "Well, David, it WAS a whale after all!"

Grandpaw And The Honey Tree

When Great-grandfather was only eighteen and Great-grandmother was sixteen, they were married. They went far out west to Indiana where they cleared a place in the woods and built a log cabin on the bank of the Wabash River.

One day Great-grandfather was sitting by the hearth when Great-grandmother said to him, "Samuel, thee knows right well that we have had no meat for almost six weeks. Thee lay off thy chopping tomorrow and go hunting."

Great-grandfather stroked his beard and answered, "Thee knows, Cornelia, that I have only one load for my gun. There is no use in going hunting until the barge comes up river with more powder."

"Well," said Great-grandmother, "thee could at least take the bird net to the lake and catch some fowls."

"Well, well, Cornelia," Great-grandfather told her, "maybe something can be done. Tomorrow I shall take the gun and the net. I know thee needs a new hominy barrel, so while I am at the lake, I will cut a section from that old hollow oak log."

Very early the next morning Great-grandfather hitched Old Alec, the horse, to the stoneboat. He put the axe, the gun, and the bird net on the stoneboat. Then he sat on the bird net. Bumpety, bumpety, bump! They bounced down the winding trail through the woods to the lake.

Great-grandfather unhitched Old Alec and tied him to a sapling where he could eat all the grass he wanted. He stretched out the bird net along the shore of the lake and put a few handfuls of corn under it to tempt the fowls. Then he walked over to the hollow log and began to chop off part of it for the new hominy barrel.

He was more than half finished when a terriffic honking noise made him look up from his chopping. Back under the bird net he saw dozens of wild geese gobbling down corn. Hundreds of others were still coming. There was no time to lose! Great-grandfather threw down his axe and ran.

The geese, frightened by his approach, stuck their heads through the meshes of the net and attempted to fly. At first they could not, for Great-grandfather had fastened it down, but there were so many of them, they ripped the net loose and started into the air with it.

Great-grandfather arrived just in time to seize one end of the net in his hands. He was swept off his feet and carried far out over the lake, but he hung on for dear life.

As they rose higher, the geese circled back to the shore. Great-grandfather could see trees below him instead of water.

Finally his feet touched the top of a high old snag. He let go of the net instantly; but his feet slipped, and he dropped into the hollow heart of the tree.

Down, down, he fell! At last his feet touched something, but it was so soft he began to sink into it.

Deeper and deeper he sank. He sank up to his shoe tops, then up to his knees. He sank to his hips, then up to his waist. Slowly it closed around his shoulders, into his whiskers and up to his chin.

Just as he thought he was disappearing altogether, his feet came to rest on solid bottom, and there stood Great-grandfather up to his neck in wild honey!

All day he struggled vainly to get out.

As evening approached, he heard,

S-C-R-I-T-C-H!
S-C-R-A-T-C-H!
S-C-R-I-T-C-H!
S-C-R-A-T-C-H!

Looking up, Great-grandfather saw the head of a big, shaggy, black bear. He was peering down and sniffing the delightful aroma of wild honey.

The old bear was wise. He started to back down inside the tree trunk so that he could smear himself with the honey. Then he intended to climb out and lick it off.

Great-grandfather watched the stubby little black tail swishing from side to side, coming nearer and nearer all the while. The instant it was within reach he snapped his jaws on it, clamped both fists in the bear's fur, and bellowed, "SCAT, THEE!"

The terrified bear tore out of the tree trunk, dragging Great-grandfather with him.

Upon reaching the top, the bear gathered his legs to jump, but Great-grandfather had the presence of mind to give him a mighty shove. Head over heels plunged the bear to the rocks below, where he sprawled "as dead as a mackerel."

Great-grandfather started to slide down the trunk. He was so sticky with honey it took him an hour and a half to reach the ground, although the tree was not more than thirty feet tall.

Great-grandfather then went to the shore to wash. As he was kneeling, he lost his balance and, being so stuck up with honey, he was unable to catch himself. Kersplash! Head first into the lake he went.

A large fish, in its fright, swam down the back of his neck and became tightly lodged in his shirt collar. Just as his head came out of the water, his collar button flew off and struck a partridge which had hopped to an overhanging branch.

Great-grandfather waded out to shore and twisted off the neck of the stunned bird. He drew the fish from the back of his shirt. Then he proceeded to skin the bear, quarter him, and hang him up.

As he was finishing this, he looked up and saw the net full of geese entangled in the top of a tall slim tree.

Thwack!

Thwack!

Thwack!

After a few blows of his axe, the tree fell.

Very much to his surprise, the falling tree struck a deer standing in the thicket. The deer was so upset by the fluttering of the geese, he did not realize his own danger until it was too late.

Great-grandfather skinned the deer and chopped off the heads of the two dozen geese in the net.

By this time it was growing late, so he went back and hitched up Old Alec.

Great-grandfather tied the bearskin over one end of the section of hollow log to make a barrel. He put the barrel on the stoneboat and drove to the honey tree.

After chopping a small hole in the tree, he drained out a barrel of honey.

He whistled and sang several songs while the barrel filled.

Great-grandfather then loaded the bear, the deer, the fish, the partridge, and all of the wild geese onto the stoneboat. As he opened

his mouth to say "Giddap," to Old Alec, he heard a soft whir-r-r-r above his head.

"Now, what can that be?" Great-grandfather asked himself.

It was just light enough for him to see that a wild turkey had lit on a branch above him. Before he could get his gun, another had landed beside the first. Then another came, and another, until there were twelve in all.

By this time Great-grandfather had his gun ready, but it was too dark to see more than the general outline of the birds.

He stood right under them and fired straight up.

The ball split the branch, which caught the toes of seven wild turkeys as it snapped back.

By the time Great-grandfather had climbed the tree, chopped off the limb, and killed the turkeys, it was pitch-dark.

He started the horse for home, but the great weight of the load broke the harness.

Great-grandfather was obliged to cut the deerskin into strips to splice the harness.

Because there was no room for Great-grandfather to ride, he had to walk and lead Old Alec.

He could not see where he was going. He could not even see his hand before his face. He had to grope each step of the way along the trail.

Meanwhile, rain began to fall.

At length he arrived home, only to find that the deerskin tugs had stretched in the rain, leaving the stoneboat with its heavy load still sitting in the woods. In disgust he jerked off Old Alec's harness and draped it over a stump.

Although he was very hungry, Great-grandfather did not eat a bit until he had given water and corn to the horse. Then he went in to his own supper of cold hominy. After that he went straight to bed.

The warm rays of the morning sun awakened Great-grandfather. From the window he could see that the sun was rapidly

drying the deerskin tugs. As they dried, they shrank and drew the stoneboat, honey and all, right up to the cabin door. Great-grandmother was delighted. She cooked the partridge for their Sunday dinner. She dried the deer meat and smoked the bear's hams. She salted down the fish and preserved all the turkeys and wild geese, half cooked in the bear grease. She made feather dusters from the turkeys' tails. She made feather beds out of the goose feathers, so that in the years afterward, all of her nine children slept on feather beds.

The Pudding That Broke Up The Preaching

Well, I suppose in a way it was all my fault, but somehow I seemed to get blamed for everything. Sometimes it's unfair. Maybe if I tell you the story of what really happened, you can make up your own mind.

You know how every year everyone gets ready for the all-day preaching on Thanksgiving at the Stone Church. All the folks from Jenkin's Corners and Silver Creek and Sandy Bottom come down for the day, and bring their dinners with them. Between the sermons and the singing they spread their dinners on the ground and have a picnic. That's where it all started and Ma says she'll never hold her head up again, because of it.

All the women try to show off their best cooking. Such pies and cakes and roast turkey and chicken you never tasted! Well, this year Ma thought she would do a pudding that would be the best thing at the preaching. When Ma makes up her mind about something, it usually happens. But not this time. She started early on Wednesday morning, mixing flour and molasses, and chopped fruit and nuts. I'd never seen a pudding just like this one, and hung around for a taste of everything that was going into the pudding. Finally Ma got so mad at my dipping into the pot that she sent me out to chop some wood. This was the first place I was blamed, because Ma says that if I hadn't pestered her so much she wouldn't have forgotten the salt. But she did and she says it's my fault.

"Saphronie!" she says, "I forgot the salt in the pudding and I'm out here picking a turkey with my fingers all stuck full of feathers. Run in the kitchen for me and put in a good big pinch of salt."

"Lawsy, Ma, I'm a-ironing my dress for the big doings tomorrow. If I stop now my iron'll get all cold." And she went on ironing as hard as she could.

"Hitty, you run in the kitchen and put some salt in the pudding for me," hollered Ma to the next oldest girl.

"I declare to goodness, Ma, I can't do it. I've just been to the witchwoman to get her to take the warts off my hands, and she's smeared axle grease over both my hands and told me not to wash it off till I saw the evening star over my left shoulder. I can't pick up a pinch of salt with axle grease all over my hands."

By this time Ma was mighty nigh worn out with hollering, but she decided to try once more. "You, Lucy! Can't you run in the kitchen and put some salt in the pudding for me?"

"Golly, Ma, I'm a-lying here in bed with cucumber peelings all over my face a-trying to bleach off the freckles before tomorrow. I can't get up now!"

"Sally!" Ma shouted to the youngest girl. "Hump yourself into the kitchen and throw some salt in the pudding for me."

"Goodness sakes, Ma, I'm a-working like fire to get my hair rolled up on old stockings, so's I'll have curls for the doings tomorrow. I ain't got time to salt the pudding!"

Since there weren't any more girls to ask, Ma hollered at my older brother, "Rufus, please go in the kitchen and throw a spoonful of salt into the pudding." But Rufus was busy, too.

He was a young fellow, beginning to cotton to girls and do a little courting. "I swan, Ma," he called, "I'm all full of bear's grease. Been slicking down my hair with it, and now I'm a-greasing my Sunday-go-to-meeting boots. I can't put any salt in any pudding now!"

By that time all the children were used up, and Ma began to holler at her old man. "Lem, can't you stop whatever you're doing and go put a spoonful of salt in the pudding?"

"Shucks, Ma, I'm a-cleaning my gun for tomorrow. S'posing a nice fat rabbit ran across the road whilst we're a-going. If my gun wasn't ready, we'd miss a good rabbit stew for supper. Got my hands full of gun soot. I can't take care of your pudding now."

She never asked me to salt the pudding. I guess she was still mad at me.

"Oh, tarnation!" Ma said to herself, clean out of patience. "I'll do it myself!" So she washed the feathers off her hands, and into the kitchen she marched. She got a good big pinch of salt, went over to the hearth where the pudding was boiling away in a pot swung over the fire, and threw it in.

Well, after a while Saphronie got her dress all done up, and she got to feeling a little ashamed that she hadn't done what Ma had asked her to do. So she went over to the salt box, got a big pinch, and threw it into the pudding.

Hitty got to feeling bad about refusing Ma, too. "I reckon I could manage to get some salt in that pudding if I tried," she said. So she went into the kitchen, picked up a spoon with her black greasy hands, dipped up a good big dose of salt, and stirred it into the pudding.

Then Lucy, lying back on the bed with her face covered with cucumbers, got to thinking that she hadn't done right, not to help

her Ma when she was asked. So she got up, went to the hearth, and put some more salt in the pudding.

No sooner had she got out of the way, than Sally came into the kitchen with her hair done up in knobs all over her head. She got a good-sized pinch of salt and dropped it in the pudding.

Then Rufus got to thinking about it after he'd finished his boots. So into the kitchen he went and dipped up a good big tablespoonful. Being a man, he didn't know much about such things, and he thought you had to put as much salt in a pudding as in a pot of stew.

Pa's conscience got to hurting him, too, and as soon as his gun was all shined up and loaded, he clumped into the kitchen, dipped up a heaping spoonful of salt, and threw it over into the pudding.

At last the pudding was done. Ma took it off the fire. It turned out of the pot as pretty as you please.

"That's as fine a looking pudding as ever I saw!" Ma said. "With a pudding like that, I might even ask the preachers to have some tomorrow."

I had finished my wood-chopping by then, and as little boys do, stuck my finger in the pudding to taste it. Right then I tried to tell Ma what was wrong, but she slapped me, and was so mad that I just kept it to myself. Now, Ma says I should have told her anyway, but I guess she's forgotten that, at the time, she wouldn't even let me speak.

The next day was sparkling and sunny. Everybody set off, walking to the church. The preaching went fine. As soon as one preacher was winded, then another one got up and took his place. By twelve o'clock they were all knocked out, so they called time out for Thanksgiving dinner.

Well, sir, Ma was so proud of that pudding that, sure enough, she invited all the preachers over to have some. There were four of 'em, so she cut off four huge hunks and told 'em to dig in.

The first one that took a bite looked at Ma with his eyes popping half out of his head.

"You never tasted anything like it, now did you?" Ma asked proudly.

"No, sister, I never did, and that's a fact," the preacher said.

"Go on, don't be bashful, finish it up!" Ma urged and the poor fellow, not to hurt her feelings, took another bite and gulped it down.

Those four preachers sure proved their Christian feelings that day. All four of 'em choked down the pudding without saying a word against it.

After they'd staggered off toward the church, Ma cut some off for herself and passed each of her family a piece. Everybody took a bite and looked up, horrified. Then it came out how each of 'em had gone into the kitchen and salted the pudding.

Ma was mortified. "Too many cooks sure spoilt this pudding!" she said.

They spoilt the preaching, too, you can be sure of that. Those preachers didn't save any souls that afternoon. As soon as one of 'em would get himself worked up to a hollering pitch, he'd have to stop and whisper for a glass of water. There was so much water hauled up to the pulpit that day that folks stopped thinking about

the preaching and began to wonder what the trouble was. Some took to counting the glasses.

What with preachers plagued with thirst, and everybody whispering to each other asking questions, the meeting broke up 'way ahead of time. The tale about the pudding finally got around and ever since that time, folks around Possum Hollow tell about Ma's pudding that broke up the big Thanksgiving all-day preaching.

Now that's how it all happened. You can see that Ma blames me for pestering her when she was making the pudding. But even worse, she says that I should have told her the pudding was salty when I tasted it. Now I wish I had, but what would you have done if your Ma slapped you and then told you to keep quiet when you did try to tell her? Do you think I'm to blame?

The Haunted Forest

Long, long ago in Lithuania there stood a beautiful forest—beautiful, at least, to strangers seeing it for the first time. But the people who lived nearby feared it, for it was said that many strange things took place among the tangled shrubs and giant oaks. Travellers told of getting lost in its depths and of seeing ruined houses filled with tiny ragged people. Parents told their children of elves who snatched at your clothes if you went inside.

One day the king heard of these strange things. When he learned that the people feared the forest, he laughed at their silly ideas and ordered the royal woodsmen to cut it down. But when the woodsmen drove their sharp axes into the first few trees, blood flowed from them, and the trees cried in pain. Cries of sadness for the fallen trees swept through the forest, and the woodsmen fled in terror.

The king gave it up as a bad job and left things the way they were. Except for a lost stranger or so, no one went into the forest for many years. Even the huntsmen's dogs barked in terror if they found their way into its depths.

Near the forest there was an old village, and the people in it were poorer than anywhere else in the country. Among them dwelt a peasant who had lost his first wife and had married again. His second wife was very hard to please. There was no end to her scolding and fighting, so the poor man spent very little time at home. He had a daughter aged seven years, called Elspeth who had been a baby when her mother died. The stepmother made her life miserable. In spite of this, Elspeth was a sunny, thoughtful child, and much prettier than her stepmother would ever admit.

One sunny afternoon, while out gathering berries with the other village children, Elspeth went to the edge of the haunted forest. Her playmates followed, and travelled further and further inside, for the berries were bigger and thicker there than anywhere else. Suddenly one of the other children noticed where they were and cried out in fear: "Run, run! We're in the haunted forest!" To the children the words were more terrible than thunder and lightning, and they fled from the forest, not stopping till they had reached the safety of their homes.

But Elspeth stayed. She could see no danger in a place where the berries lay red in the soft, green grass, where flowers hid the twisted trunks of the trees, and where birds sang in the branches overhead. "It cannot be worse than home," she thought to herself.

A little black dog came barking toward her with a silver bell tinkling on its neck. Just as she was about to run away from the dog, a little girl about her own age came running after it.

"I'm so glad to see you," the girl said. "It was brave of you not to run away with the other children. Please stay here and play with me." She held out her hand as she came forward and the dog began to wag his tail.

"Come," said the little girl, "I'll take you to my mother. She'll be as glad as I am to see you, for no one has come here for many a long year."

Hand in hand the two children ran through the forest with the little dog barking happily at their heels. Soon they came to a beautiful garden with the rarest and finest flowers growing in it. In the trees were birds of many colours that stopped their singing and tamely flew to the ground. In the very centre of the garden stood a house built of glass and precious stones.

"Mother, mother!" cried the little girl happily. "Look who has come to play with me. May she stay?"

A beautiful tall lady, who had been sitting on a bench in the garden, came toward them holding out her hand in welcome, and

Elspeth knew she had never seen anyone like her nor ever heard a voice so sweet—it was all at once like the falling of water, the singing of birds, the sweet sound of the wind.

"Whom do you bring here, my child?" she asked, kissing her daughter.

"I found her alone in the forest and brought her home to be my friend."

The kind lady asked Elspeth many questions, and when the little girl told her of her unhappy life, and that her real mother had long rested beneath the grass, the woman's eyes shone with kindness. "We shall see what can be done," she said. And while she thought about how she could let the little girl stay with them, the children went out to play.

Elspeth's friend brought out a small black box, holding it tightly in her hand.

"Have you ever seen the sea?" she asked.

"No," Elspeth replied in wonderment. "What is it?"

"Very well, you shall see it, and at once." She lifted the cover from the small box and inside lay a green leaf, a shell, and two fish bones. On the leaf lay two shining dew drops.

The child shook the dewdrops on to the grass. Suddenly there was water all around them, except for the dry place where the children stood. Then the little girl placed the oyster shell on the water. Instantly it changed into a boat! And the fish bones changed into oars. They climbed into the boat, and while Elspeth stared in surprise, her friend rowed the boat over the water. As she rowed, other boats began to gather about them, some with coloured sails puffed out in the gentle breeze. And on the breeze came the sound —the voices of hundreds of children who sang a carefree song.

"We must answer their song," the little girl cried.

Elspeth did not know what they were singing, for she had never heard any other language but her own. One word of the song was repeated over and over again: *"Kiisike, Kiisike, Kiisike."*

"What does that word mean?" she asked the little girl.

"That is my name," the little girl laughed.

After a time Kiisike's mother's voice was heard across the water and it was time to row for home.

When they had brought the boat back to the dry spot, Kiisike took the leaf from the box and dipped it into the water, shaking it so that only two drops remained on it. The water disappeared and all was as before. The oars became fish bones and the boat a shell which she carefully put back in the box.

The children ran up the path to the house and the servants came to meet them and show them to the table. And what a table! A servant brought in thirteen golden dishes. When each one was opened, it contained better food than the one before it. And when they were all opened but the last one, they began to eat. Elspeth in her whole life had never seen so much food at once, and all of it so good.

After the meal the good lady turned to one of the maids and whispered something. She left the room and soon came back, followed by a very old man with a long beard. He bowed very low before Kiisike's mother.

"Look at that child," said the woman, pointing to Elspeth. "I wish to adopt her. Make a model of her for me to send into the village tomorrow to take her place."

Although Elspeth did not understand what the woman was saying, she was sure that it would bring her no ill and was very happy. "If you are a good girl, all will go well with you," the woman told her kindly, "and you may stay with us as long as you wish."

After a short time the old man came back into the room. He was carrying a pail of clay in one hand and a basket in the other. He made the clay into the shape of a doll's body, only he left it hollow. From the basket he took a long black snake and put it into the hollow body. Then he made the head, and when it was finished and placed on the doll, it was a tiny Elspeth.

His work completed, the old man raised his head and said: "Nothing is wanting but a drop of this little girl's blood."

Seeing the fear in Elspeth's face, the good woman said: "Fear not, for it is needed for you to be happy." And taking a gold needle, she pricked her arm so gently that the girl felt nothing when she withdrew it with a drop of blood on the point. The old man took the needle and thrust it into the doll's heart. Then he laid the model into the basket to grow, promising to return the next day.

That night Elspeth lay in the largest and softest bed she had ever been in, and fell asleep at once. She was awakened by the bright sunlight streaming in the window and the sound of birds in the trees outside. In place of her old rags, she found clothes waiting for her fit for a princess. And there was her first pair of shoes!

Kiisike came to help her dress and took her to the dining hall for breakfast. To Elspeth's surprise and fear, there sat a girl in her likeness, and wearing the clothes she herself had been wearing the day before.

"Do not fear, Elspeth," said Kiisike. "The clay doll can do you

no harm. We shall send it to your stepmother in your place. She may beat it as much as she likes, for this clay doll can feel no pain, and the day will come when it will give her the punishment she should have."

Many were the happy days which followed. They were so full of gladness for Elspeth, and there were so many things to do, that she never noticed their passing. But every day she took time off from play to learn her lessons from the servants.

As she grew in size and in wisdom, she grew also in beauty. But her playmate Kiisike never grew at all. Indeed, she was no bigger and no different after several years than she was on the day Elspeth met her in the woods.

One time, when Elspeth was reading by herself in the garden, she learned the secret of the crystal house and how they remained so happy, with no one else in the world knowing of their secret life. Seeing the old man approach a large square block of stone in the garden, she watched him tap it three times with a little silver wand. A large golden rooster sprang from it and crowed loudly three times. In a second the rock opened and a table covered with a cloth came out, followed by a chair for each member of the family and a plate for each to eat from. Next followed thirteen covered dishes of food that were always there when Elspeth sat down to eat.

The girl was very curious about this, and when she had a chance to speak to the good lady alone she asked her about it.

"The old grey-bearded man is a magician," she was told, "and has been very kind to us for more than two hundred years. Everything the heart could wish for he has given us from out of the stone rock. We have had to make one promise—that I never change and that Kiisike never grow up but remain a little girl forever."

Then Elspeth asked her about the thirteenth dish and why it was at every meal and why it was never uncovered.

"That," she explained, "contains the hidden blessings of life, and if we opened it we would know all, and our happy life would

end. We must not try to take all the gifts at once, or we would lose those we already have."

Nine more years passed. By this time Elspeth had grown into a beautiful young lady. Only she had no friends, for the forest was still a fearful place to those outside. One day the kind lady called her and said: "Dearest child, the time has come when we must part."

"Dearest mother, that can never be till death comes for one of us. Having once so kindly adopted me, why do you now send me away?"

"Peace, my child. You do not understand. You are grown up now and great happiness awaits you in the world. You are a human. Your years in time will come to an end. But we never grow old here and can never leave the forest."

As Elspeth's tears flowed down her cheeks, the good lady took a golden comb from her pocket and gently combed the girl's long and lovely curls. Then she told her to go and rest, for she would begin her journey in the morning.

In all these years the stepmother had beaten the doll, but the clay model, whose body felt no pain, did not mind it. This made the wicked woman more cruel than ever. One day when she became angry, as she was about to hit the doll with a whip, the black snake, so long hidden in the hollow body, darted out and bit her. After a few days the woman died. No one ever knew what became of her daughter. But in the corner of the room lay a very real-looking doll.

As for Elspeth, she cried all the night long, for she hated to leave her friends. In the morning the kind lady gave her a ring for her finger and hung a small gold locket about her neck. Then she called the grey-bearded man and said goodbye with tears in her eyes. The old man struck Elspeth gently on the head three times with the silver wand he always carried. She felt herself changing. Her arms became wings, her feet became the claws of an eagle, and instead of her fine clothes she was covered with feathers. She flew high into the air over the green forest. Soon the crystal house and

her friends were far behind, but still she could not control her flying. The winds took her south for many days until she came to a huge forest. She was very tired. She stopped moving her great wings and fell lower and lower.

Suddenly a sharp arrow struck her feathers and she began to fall, fall, fall! She thought she was asleep and having a bad dream that would end when she hit the ground. When she awoke, she found herself lying in long grass, not as an eagle any more, but back in her own lovely body. Everything lay behind her like a dream and she wanted so much to fall asleep again. Suddenly she felt someone near her, comforting her and trying to raise her to her feet. When she turned, she saw a tall youth with a happy face bending over her. He began to speak:

"It was a happy hour when I rode forth this morning. I have been dreaming every night for half a year that I would find you in this forest. I have looked everywhere, and have passed this way a hundred times. My dream has never come true. But today, I shot an arrow at a passing eagle, and while looking for it, I found you. I shall never let you go."

Suddenly some pigeons flew over them, each carrying a present for Elspeth. One brought her a message from the haunted forest:

"Marry the Prince who has found you and great happiness will be yours."

And so it was.

The Cat With Nine Lives

The cat that sat on the green grass in the tiny sized park on Peachtree Street was the biggest, fattest, shiniest black cat anyone has ever seen. He washed his face, shook his whiskers and walked slowly down the street.

First he stopped at the white house on the corner. He mewed softly and swished his tail slowly back and forth. The door opened and a little girl came out.

"Richard," she said. "I've been wondering where you were." She picked Richard up in her arms and petted him. "You're the sweetest, best cat in the world. And here's your cream."

She stood on the steps, watching, while Richard lapped up the cream. She rubbed his ears when he brushed against her legs, purring happily. "You hurry back this time," she called after him as he walked down the path to the street.

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the house with green shutters. He hopped up on the kitchen window sill and mewed loudly.

The back door opened and a little boy stood there, holding a green dish full of chopped meat.

"Boots!" cried the little boy. "Where have you been? You big old brave cat, you. I bet you've been chasing birds."

Boots-Richard purred loudly and looked brave and tiger-like. Quickly he ate the food in the bowl, purred and washed his paws daintily.

"Be sure you come back for supper," the little boy called after him. "And don't catch any birds."

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street. He stopped at the red brick bungalow and scratched carefully on the door.

"Smoky," cried the little old lady. "It's about time you came

home." She held the door open and Smoky-Boots-Richard slipped inside. "Are you hungry?" She held out a bowl. But Smoky-Boots-Richard wasn't hungry at the moment. He slipped past the old lady and jumped up on the soft cushion in the big chair. Right now he wanted a little nap.

The old lady smiled at him. "It's so cosy having a cat in the house," she said.

Later the big black cat woke up and mewed softly so that the old lady would let him out. "You come back for supper," she called after him.

The big cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the big grey house. The nurse was already on the steps with the little girl in the big chair.

"There he is, dear," she said. "There's Timmy back again. I told you he wasn't lost." The little girl smiled at Timmy-Smoky-Boots-Richard.

The big black cat rolled on his back and leaped into the air after a feather. He chased a rubber ball and chewed at a catnip mouse. The little girl in the big chair laughed and laughed.

"He's the funniest cat in the world," she said. "My Timmy's the funniest cat anywhere."

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly out of the yard, down Peachtree Street until he came to the little frame house with the big maple tree in the yard.

"Frank," called the lady in the garden. "Frank, Chips is here again."

The carpenter came out of the house. "Chips old boy," he said. "Where have you been? I guess you're ready for your fish, eh?"

Chips-Timmy-Smoky-Boots-Richard sat patiently on the walk while the carpenter went for the fish. He ate slowly, being very careful of the bones. When he was finished he washed his face and purred happily. The carpenter and his wife patted him and said, "Don't stay away so long next time, Chips. We were worried about you."

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the schoolhouse. The teacher was just locking the door behind her.

"Joe," she cried. "Oh, I've missed you. Naughty pussy to run away like that. But I've saved some cream for you. Just a minute."

Joe-Chips-Timmy-Smoky-Boots-Richard followed her into the schoolhouse and waited while she filled his bowl with cream. He lapped it up quickly then sat down to wash his face while the teacher sat on the edge of her desk, smiling at him and telling him what a sweet naughty cat he was.

"You'd better come back earlier tomorrow," she called as he walked out of the school. "I'm bringing some salmon for you."

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the apartment house.

Two little girls, dressed exactly alike, were sitting on the steps.

"Handsome!" they cried together. "Where have you been?"

Handsome-Joe-Chips-Timmy-Smoky-Boots-Richard purred and rubbed against them. He rolled on his back as they rubbed his stomach, and chased the little rubber mouse they threw for him.

"Oh, you sweet old cat," cried the twins together. "We thought you'd run away."

The big cat purred again and curled up at their feet for a little catnap. When he woke the sun was going down. He rubbed against the twins' ankles and started down the walk.

"Don't forget to come back," cried the twins after him.

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the police station. He mewed loudly outside the door and a fat policeman let him in.

"Mickey," said the fat policeman. "I wish I knew where you vanish to."

Mickey - Handsome - Joe - Chips - Timmy - Smoky - Boots - Richard purred and looked very wise.

"Here's your cream, anyway," said the fat policeman. "And here's a little bit of meat." He rubbed the sleek black fur. "You're the fattest cat I've ever seen."

The big black cat purred and ate his meat. He washed his face and twitched his whiskers. He walked slowly around the policeman, inspecting the desk and the waste-basket.

"Can't find any mice here, can you?" laughed the fat policeman. "You're a real police cat." He rubbed the cat's ears and added, "Don't stay away too long," as he opened the door to let him out.

The big black cat switched his tail to show he'd heard and walked slowly down Peachtree Street until he came to the little house that stood all alone at the end. He purred softly outside the door.

A thin old man opened the door. He smiled happily. "Mr. Malone," he said. "Home at last."

Mr. Malone - Mickey - Handsome - Joe - Chips - Timmy - Smoky-Boots-Richard walked into the little house. He rubbed happily against the old man's legs.

"Are you hungry, Mr. Malone?" asked the old man.

The big cat purred and walked over to the big chair by the window. He jumped up and settled himself comfortably on the cushions and began washing his face. He sleeked down his black fur and stretched and yawned. Then he curled up into a fat black ball, with his nose tucked in close to his tail, closed his eyes and went to sleep.

The old man looked at him. "I don't know how you stay so fat, Mr. Malone," he said. "You never seem to eat anything. But it certainly is nice to have a cat to keep me company in the night."

He rubbed the big cat's ears and Mr. Malone-Mickey-Handsome-Joe-Chips-Timmy-Smoky-Boots-Richard purred and looked very wise, even in his sleep.

COURAGE HAS A CRIMSON COAT 6

Courage has a crimson coat
Trimmed with trappings bold,
Knowledge dons a dress of note,
Fame's is cloth of gold.
Far they ride and fair they roam,
Much they do and dare.
Gray-gowned Patience sits at home,
And weaves the stuff they wear.

NANCY BYRD TURNER

The Bear

On a spring evening, in the orchard behind the farm where Tom Pagett's circus was still in its winter quarters, the entire Pagett family, together with such other circus folk as wintered with them, were gathered in front of the brown bear's cage.

In the cages, the lions and tigers, having been fed by Josef, their Spanish trainer, were settling themselves for sleep. But the brown bear's supper—and his morning's breakfast—lay untouched on the floorboards of his cage.

The bear, whom they had named Boxer, because of the great strength of his forepaws, had been with Pagett's for exactly a week, and all that time Tom had been putting food before him—tempting him with every nice thing he could think of. And all that time Boxer had eaten nothing.

Now, as the circus folk stood in a puzzled group and stared through the bars at him, Boxer sat humped against the back wall of his cage, and stared over their heads into space.

"Anybody'd think we were trying to poison the animal—he's so suspicious," said Hester Pagett.

"I don't like being beaten," said Tom, "but I reckon we'll just have to send him back. He's homesick, that's what it is—he'll be nothing but skin and bone presently."

"That's right—send him packing," agreed Hester. "He's nasty-tempered. He'd as soon crush anybody's head in as look at 'em. And those claws! I feel queer every time you go to put food before him."

"He misses his brothers and sisters," said Josef, who had a very tender and understanding heart. "He is alone for the first time in his life—you understand? It would have been better, Boss, if you had bought the whole family of bears."

"So I would have, but I didn't get the chance," explained Tom.

"Those animals—they don't show their feelings," observed Ferny, the elephant-keeper. "You can't read them like you can elephants. You can always tell what an elephant is thinking."

"We can all do all right without a bear, anyhow," said young Jacky Pagett, who didn't care for anything but monkeys.

"It is a pity, though," remarked one of the men. "He must weigh over six hundred pounds. And just look at the coat on that creature!"

"It isn't as if he were a horse," said Dan Pagett, the boy rider. "Horses make up the circus, don't they, Dad?"

"All of us make up the circus," answered Tom Pagett. "But that animal is going back where he came from tomorrow."

With her small, sharp face upturned within six inches of the bars, little Andalusa stood among the group of older people. She stared at the bear. She was a tiny figure, with dark chestnut hair falling over her shoulders. Her mouth was slightly open, and her lips were pouting. Her yellow-brown eyes were almost as empty as the bear's eyes were. She always looked this way when she sat among the audience in the circus tent, following every act. As Tom Pagett had been more than once heard to remark: "There are no flies on our Lu when she pulls that face."

Well, come to that, there weren't many flies on Andalusa at any time.

One after another the older folk drifted away from the bear's cage. Hester went to prepare the family's evening meal. Ferny went back to the elephant shed, where that seven-ton-weight of spoiled childishness, the Queen of Sheba, who couldn't bear him out of her sight for more than a few moments, weaved restlessly and trumpeted her need of him. Josef went to telephone the dealers about a further supply of meat for his big cats, and Jack to give the monkeys their supper. There was no question about their appetites.

They were complaining now like a nursery full of hungry babies.

Left alone in front of the bear's cage, Andalusa began to talk.

"Aren't you a silly old bear?" she said.

There was no reply to this question. Andalusa pressed her nose against the bars to look at Boxer, and Boxer stared over Andalusa's head into nothing.

"Don't you want to work on our show?" asked Andalusa. "You must work in some show. And ours is the best."

Humped sadly against the back wall of the cage, Boxer gazed into nothing.

"You are treated well on our show," said Andalusa. "You know that."

Boxer didn't seem to know it.

"But we can't have skinny things about," went on Andalusa. "Doesn't look well. You'd better make up your mind to eat."

A stale loaf was lying just inside the cage. Andalusa got a stick and poked the loaf across the floorboards. "This has currants in it," she explained, pushing the loaf against Boxer's leg. "Come on, eat!"

A queer sound that was something between a growl and a moan

sounded in Boxer's throat, but he didn't look at the loaf, nor at the stick nor at Andalusa. Nor did he move a muscle.

Andalusa pulled the stick out of the cage and threw it away. "You aren't tough enough," she remarked. "That's what's the matter with you. *I'm* tough. I don't mind where I go, or who I go with. Went to Ireland once, and wasn't sick. Might go to America tomorrow. And *I* wouldn't mope the way you do. I'd eat and eat all the way over."

"Anda-lus-a!" That was Hester calling. "Supper!"

Andalusa pushed back her hair from her face, and said,

"You aren't bad looking—in your way. But you aren't tough enough."

Hester had done a big baking that day, and the kitchen smelled warm and rich with homemade fruit cake. There were bacon and onions for supper, but Andalusa demanded cake and tea with canned milk in it. Andalusa, being the only girl, and years younger than her brothers, was certainly spoiled. But, as Hester said, "If the child won't drink cow's milk, what can you do?"

Having eaten her fill, Andalusa yawned, rubbed her eyes and said, "I'm going to bed now."

She dipped a spoon into the milk tin and brought it out with the bowl brimful and milk spilling all up the handle. Hester snatched the tin from her. Andalusa grinned, put the spoon in her mouth, turned it round, and sucked the handle.

"You rascal, you!" exclaimed Hester.

Andalusa slipped off to bed.

Her tiny bedroom was at the back of the farmhouse and overlooked the orchard. The moon was up, and from her window Andalusa could see in its rays, the dew-wet bars of Boxer's cage. Behind the bars were the moonlit boards streaked with thin, slanting shadows. There was a glitter of heaped straw, and behind that a still, rocklike shape. There was a spot of light on the end of its nose.

"He's not moved—not one inch," said Andalusa.

When she got into bed she was "pulling that face" as Tom Pagett would have said.

"He doesn't know when he's well off," she muttered crossly.

A stray lock of hair fell across her mouth. She brushed it away with a sticky little hand. The hand tasted sweet. Andalusa sucked it happily. She thought that she might manage one night to hide a whole tin of milk in her pocket before coming to bed.

"Then I would have sweet dreams," she chuckled.

"Well, of course, a spanking might follow, but it would be worth it. She was almost asleep when a thought struck her. Bears liked sweet things; probably as much as she did. If she was this fond of milk in a tin, even a homesick bear wouldn't be able to resist it.

Wide awake now, she swung her legs out of bed. She was going downstairs to tell her dad to try Boxer with a tin of milk. Then she had another idea. She wouldn't tell her dad. She would feed Boxer herself. In the morning she could prove to them all that she knew a thing or two. Her dad had said that if they could coax Boxer to eat something he would be all right.

"I'll feed him," thought Andalusa, "see if I don't."

A great adventure this! Now she must keep herself awake till all the family was in bed. She sat with her hands around her knees, and waited. Time passed, but nobody came upstairs. When she found herself nodding and snuggling down under the bed clothes, she put a chair on her pillow with the legs sticking into her back. That kept her awake for a little while; then she nodded forward. She had to get another chair and place it on the bed with the legs against her chest.

"Now you can't fall asleep," she told herself.

Hours passed again—or so it seemed to Andalusa. The chair legs prodded her, first in her back, then in her chest. Still the family did not come up to their beds.

"Oh, this is nearly as bad as that time when the seating broke and the fat man fell on top of me."

She slept and dreamed that Boxer was holding a tin of milk over his nose and growling: "More! More!" A chair leg poked her awake and she knew then it was not Boxer, but her father snoring.

"That's all right then," said Andalusa, and got up and felt her way, tiptoeing, down into the kitchen.

The moon was shining outside the uncurtained window, and the whole room was bright. Andalusa looked in the cupboard and counted seven tins of milk, including the one Hester had opened for her tea. She took a basket, climbed on a chair, and reached for the tins. What else? A can opener from the table drawer. Could she open this? A small girl who could already ride standing on a pony was not to be stopped by such a small thing as a can opener.

Then her eyes fell on Hester's big cakes, set in the windowsill, covered with a white cloth. One by one those cakes went into the basket, till it was full to the handle. And then she carefully opened the back door and stepped out into the moonlight.

"Isn't this a treat!" said Andalusa.

Boxer was not asleep. He was still sitting against the back wall staring into space. The thick straw glittered, and his eyes shone in the moonlight.

"You'll be dead by morning if you won't eat," said Andalusa crossly.

She put down her basket, tipped sweet milk over a piece of cake and held it between the bars.

"Come on," she said, "try this—it's good."

"Haven't you got any sense?" asked Andalusa. "It's good, I tell you."

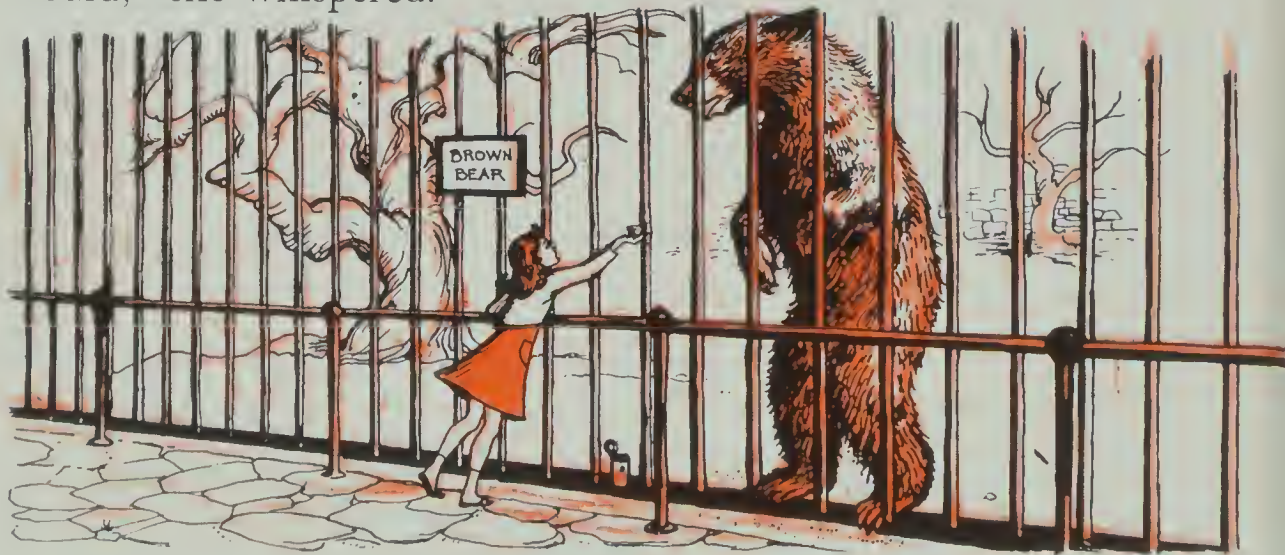
She might have been talking to a stone.

To prove how good it was, she pulled back her hand and took a bite herself; then another bite. But that wouldn't do! She hadn't come out to eat, but to feed Boxer. She took aim, flung the sticky cake through the bars, and hit Boxer on the nose.

Andalusa gripped the bars with both her hands, almost held her breath. Boxer had his head down now, he was sniffing, slowly, in the straw.

"There, there—there at your feet!" breathed Andalusa.

Slowly Boxer put out his tongue again, and licked the cake. Yes, Andalusa was right. He might be homesick, but he couldn't resist the taste of canned milk, any more than she could. She wanted to shout and skip, but she stopped herself. Not for nothing had she watched the training of wild animals.

"Now eat the cake! No need to starve because you said you would," she whispered.

Would he, or wouldn't he? Gripping the bars with white fingers, Andalusa breathed a prayer. Boxer sniffed the cake, took it in his mouth, dropped it, picked it up again—and swallowed it.

Andalusa heaved a great sigh, and at once became businesslike. "There's plenty more where that came from!" she said, covering another piece of cake with milk. "Here you are! But this time you come for it—use your legs." Boxer raised his nose to sniff.

"You're hungry!" exclaimed Andalusa. "Your mouth is watering!"

Boxer's mouth was watering, and he was standing up on his hind legs, and moving stiffly across to the bars.

"Good for you!" cried Andalusa, as he took the cake from her hand.

It was easy after that, except that the milk tin was soon empty. Andalusa pushed the empty tin through the bars for Boxer to lick out, while she struggled to open another. She cut her fingers on the tin, and blamed the bear for it.

"Here I am cutting myself to pieces for you," she said. "And are you grateful? And do you care?"

Boxer put the tip of his muzzle through the bars, and Andalusa smacked his nose. Then she offered him a whole big cake, dripping with sweet milk. Of course he couldn't pull it through the bars, and it fell onto the wet grass. Andalusa picked it up, broke off a piece and pushed it into the cage.

But she was beginning to feel cold. "We shall be here all night at this rate," she said. "If the door was open, I'd feed you in a hurry."

Well, and why shouldn't the door be open? The bolt was high above her reach, but that was soon overcome. A box that Josef had been painting stood under an apple tree. Andalusa dragged it over, climbed onto it, and swung the door back.

Then, basket and all, she stepped into the cage.

"Do you know who this is?" she asked Boxer. "This is Andalusa Pagett, the famous bear-trainer. Up on your hind legs for Andalusa Pagett, you great booby! Up, I say! Or you get no more cake from me."

Ho, Ho! He *was* up on his hind legs, his huge body towered over her, and his long sharp claws shone. Andalusa wished the family could see her; then she was glad they couldn't. For though she held the cake high above her head, she couldn't reach anywhere near Boxer's muzzle. He dropped on all fours, and Andalusa, to escape being knocked over, backed quickly against the bars. With the jerk she gave, the cage door shook, swung slowly, and clanged shut.

"See what you've done now!" exclaimed Andalusa.

Boxer had his head in the basket. He had just learned how

very hungry he was. He took a tin of milk in his paws, crushed the tin open with his teeth, and tilting his head back, tipped the milk down his throat. Andalusa watched him with her lips parted. She didn't feel afraid, exactly. She had been taught from babyhood that a Pagett was never afraid. But the great beast was so very big, and it looked now as if he was out to eat the world.

"Seeing that you can eat," she said, "I think I'll be going."

Boxer took no notice. The tin was over his nose, and his tongue was busy at the bottom of it. Standing on tiptoe, Andalusa put her hand to the door catch, but she kept her face to the bear as a good animal-trainer should.

"Good night," she said.

The catch was tricky and do what she would the door would not open. She pulled, she pushed, she rattled, she jerked; forgetting the habits of all good animal-trainers, she turned her back on Boxer and fiddled till her fingers were sore. But the catch would not move, and in the end she gave up trying.

"Well," she said at last, pushing the hair back from her face, "seems you and I have to make a night of it."

Boxer crunched the last tin of milk between his teeth.

"There's all these bits and pieces you haven't eaten yet," said Andalusa, pointing to Boxer's breakfast and supper. "If you hadn't been so greedy, I could do with a piece of cake myself."

At six in the morning, young Jacky burst into his parents' room shouting:

"Our Lu's in the bear's cage!"

"You're mad!" said Tom Pagett, waking suddenly from a sound sleep. But even as he said "You're mad", he was out of bed pulling on his trousers.

"She is, I tell you!" cried Jacky. "She's asleep and he's asleep."

Tom Pagett was through the door by this time, and Hester was out of bed putting on her dressing-gown. In less than no time everyone on the farm was outside the bear's cage.

They whispered as they looked through the bars.

On his bed of straw Boxer lay full length in sleep with his huge legs stretched, paws slightly curled, showing the long sharp claws. Between those claws and the bear's muzzle lay Andalusa, with her head on his broad chest, one arm flung across his neck, and the straw pulled up round her. There was no food left in the cage, but on the floor there were the crushed remains of seven tins of canned milk, and a broken basket.

"Oh, good heavens!" whispered Hester Pagett. "When he wakes, he'll kill her!"

"I'll try and get her out," whispered Tom, "before he wakes. Stand by with the poles."

They ran for poles. They stood with the pole ends through the bars, ready to hold back Boxer should he wake to kill. There might be noise enough in a few moments, but now they neither moved nor spoke. Tom reached the cage door, opened it without a sound, and swung himself inside.

It wasn't much of a noise he made as he took a step forward, only the faintest tremble of the floorboards under his feet. But it woke Boxer. He eyed Tom Pagett, and growled.

"Easy then, easy, old fellow!" said Tom.

Boxer growled again.

"He's wild!" whispered Hester.

But Boxer wasn't really wild; he only wanted to protect his new friend. As Boxer growled again and watched Tom, Andalusa woke up.

For a moment, not finding herself in bed, she blinked in surprise. Then she understood: her father inching forward, the faces outside the cage, the poles poked through the bars. Yes, she understood. She rose to her feet.

"You're stupid," she announced superbly. "All of you are stupid. *You* don't know how to handle bears! Eat? Of course, he'll eat! Bring me some bread, and I'll show you!"

"Come out, Lu, please come out!" whispered Hester.

Andalusa gave her mother a queenly smile. Then she stooped and patted Boxer's head.

"I'll bring your breakfast soon," she told him. "*You* aren't going to be sent away, not today, or even tomorrow."

Tom Pagett watched every move, ready to leap forward should Boxer turn nasty. But Boxer was feeling full and happy. He found that life was good and that he had a friend after all. He seemed to know now that she was not being taken from him. He lifted his huge, shaggy head and licked her fingers. Then he dropped to the straw again and stretched.

Andalusa walked proudly to the cage door, and Josef lifted her down. Tom Pagett stepped out after her. Now that everything was over, he gave a great burst of laughter in which relief and pride were mixed.

"Our Lu, she doesn't know what fear means," he thought.

He turned away so that Andalusa should not see how proud he was of her, for she was spoiled enough already.

But Hester grabbed her small daughter, turned her over her knee and began to spank her. The spanking was by no means a light one, for Hester had a strong hand and arm. However, Andalusa's sense of showmanship did not desert her. The spanking was taking place in full view of her friend the bear. He came to the front of the cage. He might be said to have a front seat for the show. Andalusa peeped at him from under Hester's arm, and her sharp little face wore a saucy look.

"Told you I was tough, didn't I?" she shouted. "Now you see I can take it!"

His First Bronc

Billy was a born cowboy; the only kind that ever makes the real cowboy. One day Lem told him he could have a certain black horse if he could break him. It was a little black horse, pretty as a picture. Billy went wild at the sight of him, and ran into the corral to get as close a view of the horse as he could.

"By golly!" he said. "I've always wanted to break in a horse. That'll be fun."

The next morning Lem found Billy in the coral with the new horse.

"Well, I see you're busy right early, Billy."

"You bet you," he said. "He's some horse, ain't he?"

"He sure is," agreed Lem. "And your first bronc, too."

An hour or so later Billy had his saddle on the black horse, and cinched to stay. By this time quite a crowd had gathered around. The foreman, the cowboys, all the ranch hands were watching. All was set but taking the hobbles off the horse's front feet and climbing on. Some of the men offered to do that for Billy, but that young cowboy refused. He wanted to do it all himself; it was his bronc.

Billy gathered his hackamore rope and a hunk of mane to go with it, grabbed the saddle horn with his right hand and, sticking his foot in the stirrup, eased himself into the saddle. He twisted around until he was well set like an old bronc fighter; saw that the length of reins between his hands and the pony's head was just right, then he reached over and pulled off the blindfold.

Billy's lips closed tight; he was ready for whatever happened. The pony blinked at seeing daylight again, looked back at the boy sitting on him, snorted, and trotted off.

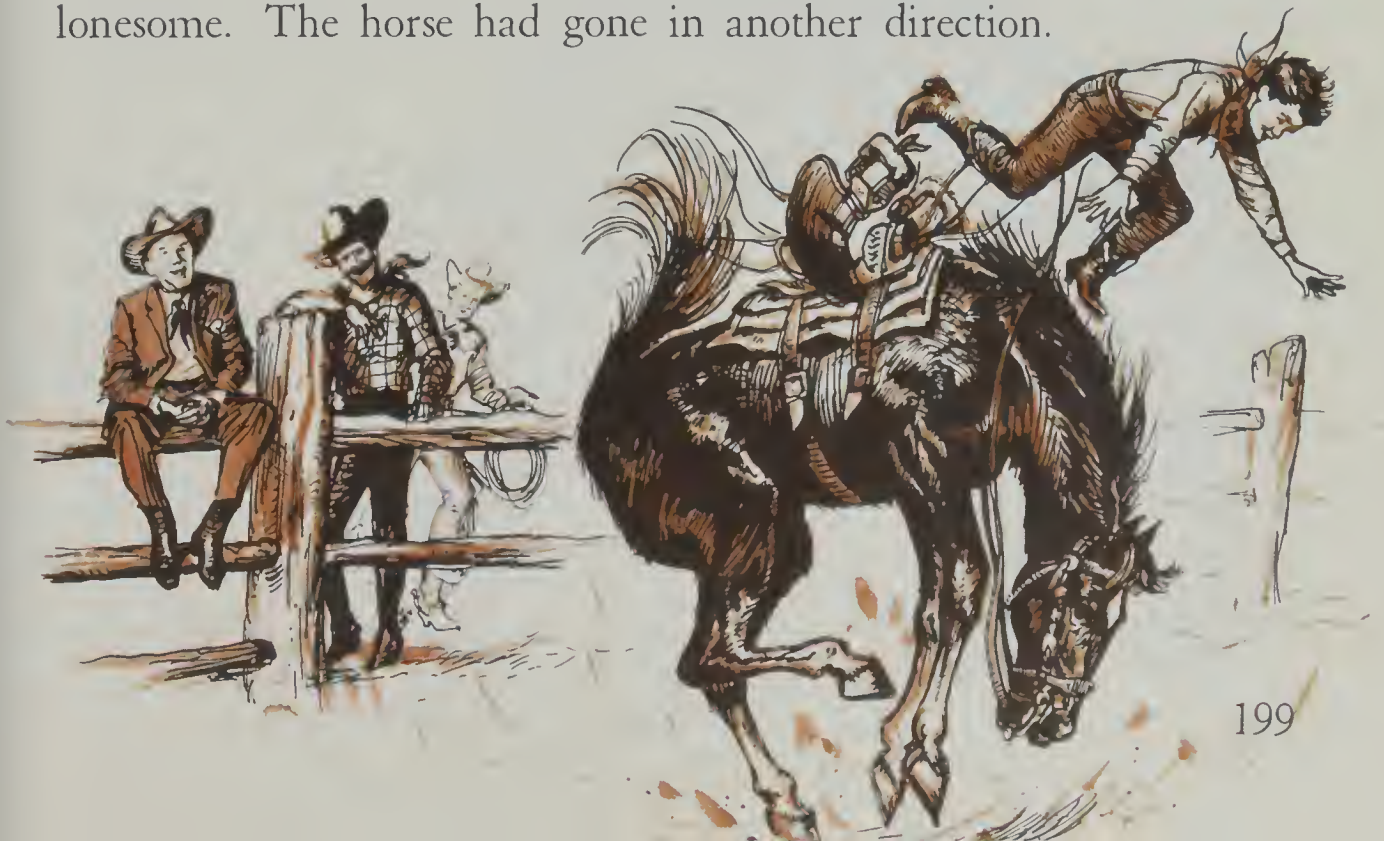
A laugh went up from all around. Billy turned a blank face toward his father and hollered, "Hey, Dad, he won't buck!"

Another laugh was heard and when it quieted down, Lem spoke up.

"Never mind, son," he said trying to keep a straight face, "he might buck yet."

The words were no more out of his mouth, when the little black horse lit into bucking. Billy was loosened the first jump for he'd been paying more attention to what his dad was saying than to what he was sitting on. The little pony crowhopped around the corral and bucked just enough to keep the kid from getting back in the saddle. Billy was hanging on to all he could find, but pretty soon the little pony happened to make the right kind of a jump for the kid and he straightened up again.

Billy rode pretty fair the next few jumps and managed to keep his seat pretty well under him, but he wasn't satisfied with just sitting there; he grabbed his hat and began fanning. All went fine for a few more jumps and then trouble broke loose. Billy dropped his hat and made a wild grab for the saddle horn.

But the hold on the saddle horn didn't help him any; he kept going, up and up he went, a little higher every jump, and pretty soon he started coming down. When he did that he was by his lonesome. The horse had gone in another direction.

"Where is he?" said Billy, trying to get some of the earth out of his eyes.

"Right here, Son," said his father, who'd caught the horse.

He handed the kid the hackamore reins and touched him on the hand.

"And listen here, young feller, if I catch you grabbing the horn with that paw of yours again, I'll tie it and the other right back where you can't use 'em."

Those few words hit the kid pretty hard. There was a frown on his face and his lips were shaking at the same time. He was both ashamed and cross.

His father held the horse while Billy climbed on again.

"Are you ready, cowboy?" Lem looked up at his son and smiled.

After some efforts the kid smiled back and answered,

"Yes, Dad, let him go."

The pony lit into bucking the minute he was loose this time and seemed to mean business from the start. Time and again Billy's hand reached down as if to grab the saddle horn, but he kept away from it.

The little horse was bucking pretty good, and for a kid, Billy was doing mighty fine, but the horse still proved too much for him. Billy kept getting further and further away from the saddle till finally he slid along the pony's shoulder and to the ground once again.

The kid was up before his dad could get to him and began looking for his horse right away.

"I don't think you'd better ride him any more today, Sonny," Lem said as he brushed some of the dust off the kid's clothes. "Maybe tomorrow you can ride him easy."

But Billy turned and saw the horse challenging him, it seemed, and he crossed the corral, caught the black, blindfolded him and climbed on again.

Then Lem walked up to Billy and said, so nobody else could hear:

"You go after him this time, Billy, and just make this pony think you're the wolf of the world. Paw him the same as you did that last calf you rode."

"Y-e-e-ep!" Billy shouted as he jerked the blind off the pony's eyes. "I'm a wolf!"

Billy was a wolf; he'd turned challenger and he was pawing the black from ears to rump. Daylight showed plenty between him and the saddle but somehow he managed to stick on and stay right side up. The horse, surprised at the change of events, finally let up on his bucking. He was getting scared and wanted to start running.

After that it was easy for Billy; he rode him around the corral a couple of times and then, all smiles and proud as a peacock, he climbed off.

Billy had ridden his first bronc.

Elizabeth Ann Fails In An Examination

Something perfectly dreadful had happened in school that day. Examinations had started, and Elizabeth Ann had made a miserable mess of both her arithmetic and spelling tests.

Now, you know what examinations did to Elizabeth Ann. Or haven't I told you yet?

Well, if I haven't, it's because words fail me. If there is anything horrid that an examination didn't do to Elizabeth Ann, I have yet to hear of it. It began years ago, before she ever went to school, when she heard Aunt Frances talking about how she had feared examinations when she was a child. She always told how they dried up her mouth and made her ears ring and her head ache and her knees get all weak and her mind a blank so that she didn't know what two and two made. Of course, Elizabeth Ann didn't feel all those things right off at her first examination, but by the time she had had several and had rushed to tell Aunt Frances about how awful they were, and the two of them had sympathized with one another and then wept about her resulting low marks, why, she not only had all the feelings Aunt Frances had ever had, but a good many more that she made up herself.

Well, she had had them all and had them hard during the examination that day. Her mouth had gone dry and her knees had shaken and her elbows had felt as though they had no more bones in them than so much jelly. Her eyes had smarted, and oh, what answers she had made! That dreadful tight panic had clutched at her throat when she started the first question. She had disgraced herself ten times over. She went hot and cold to think of it, and felt quite sick with hurt pride. She who did so well every day, and was so much looked up to by her classmates; what must they be

thinking of her! To tell the truth, she had been crying as she walked along the woods, because she was so sorry for herself. Her eyes were all red still, and her throat sore from the big lump in it.

And now she would live it all over again as she told the Putney cousins. For of course they must be told. She had always told Aunt Frances everything that happened in school. It happened that Aunt Abigail had been taking a nap when she got home from school, and so she had come out to the sugar-house, where Cousin Ann and Uncle Henry were making syrup, to have it over with as soon as possible. She went up to the little house now, dragging her feet and hanging her head, and opened the door.

Cousin Ann, in a very short old skirt and a man's coat and high rubber boots, was just poking some more wood into the big fire which blazed under the broad, flat pan where the sap was boiling. The rough, brown hut was filled with white steam and that sweetest of all odours, hot maple syrup. Cousin Ann turned her head, her face red with the heat of the fire, and nodded at the child.

"Hello, Betsy, you're just in time. I've saved out a cupful of hot syrup for you, all ready to wax."

Betsy hardly heard this, although she had been wild about waxed sugar on snow ever since her very first taste of it. "Cousin Ann," she said unhappily, "our examinations started today."

"Did they?" said Cousin Ann, dipping a thermometer into the boiling syrup.

"Yes, and we had the worst examinations!" said Betsy.

"Did you?" said Cousin Ann, holding the thermometer up to the light and looking at it.

"And you know how perfectly awful examinations make you feel," said Betsy, very near to tears again.

"Why no," said Cousin Ann, sorting over syrup tins. "They never made me feel awful. I thought they were sort of fun."

"Fun!" cried Betsy, angrily, staring through the beginnings of her tears.

"Why, yes. Like taking a dare, don't you know? Somebody dares you to jump off the fence, and you do it to show 'em. I always used to think examinations were like that. Somebody dares you to spell 'pneumonia', and you do it to show 'em. Here's your cup of syrup. You'd better go right out and wax it while it's hot."

Elizabeth Ann took the cup in her hand, but she did not look at it. "But supposing you get so scared you can't spell 'pneumonia', or anything else!" she said feelingly. "That's what happened to me. You know how your mouth gets all dry and your knees . . ." She stopped. Cousin Ann had said she did not know all about those things. "Well, anyhow, I got so scared I could hardly write! And I made the most awful mistakes—things I know just as well! I spelled 'doubt' without any b and 'separate' with an e, and I said Alberta was bounded on the north by British Columbia, and I. . . ."

"Oh, well," said Cousin Ann, "it doesn't matter if you really know the right answers, does it? That's the main thing."

This was an idea which had never in all her life entered Betsy's brain and she did not take it in now. She only shook her head unhappily and went on in a sad tone. "And I said 13 and 8 are 22! And I wrote March without any capital M, and I. . . ."

"Look here, Betsy, do you want to tell me all this?" Cousin Ann spoke in the quick, ringing voice she had once in a while which made everybody, from old Shep up, open his eyes and get his wits about him. Betsy gathered hers and thought hard; and she decided. No, she didn't really want to tell Cousin Ann all about it. Why was she doing it? Because she thought that was the thing to do. "Because if you don't really want to," went on Cousin Ann, "I don't see that it's doing anybody any good. I guess Hemlock Mountain will stand right there just the same even if you did forget to put a b in 'doubt'. And your syrup will be too cool to wax right if you don't take it out pretty soon."

She turned back to stoke the fire, and Elizabeth Ann found herself walking out of the door. It fell shut after her, and there

she was under the clear, pale-blue sky, with the sun just above the rim of Hemlock Mountain. She looked up at the big mountains, all blue and silver with shadows and snow, and wondered what in the world Cousin Ann had meant. Of course Hemlock Mountain would stand there just the same. But what of it? What did that have to do with her arithmetic, with anything? She had failed in her examinations, hadn't she?

She found a clean white snow-bank under a pine tree, and, setting her cup of syrup down in a safe place, began to pat the snow down hard to make the right bed for the waxing of the syrup. The sun, very hot for that March day, brought out strongly the tarry perfume of the big pine tree. Near her the sap dripped into a bucket, already half full, which hung on a maple tree. A blue jay rushed suddenly through the upper branches of the wood, his screaming and chattering voice sounding like noisy children at play.

Elizabeth Ann took up her cup and poured some of the thick, hot syrup out on the hard snow, making loops and curves as she poured. It stiffened and hardened at once, and she lifted up a great loop of it, threw her head back, and let it drop into her mouth. The sweetness of summer days was in that mouthful, part of it still hot, part of it icy and wet with melting snow. She crunched it all together into a delicious big lump and sucked on it dreamily, her eyes on the rim of Hemlock Mountain, high above her there, the snow on it bright golden in the sunlight. Uncle Henry had promised to take her up to the top as soon as the snow went off. She wondered what the top of a mountain would be like. Uncle Henry had said the main thing was that you could see so much of the world at once. He said it was too queer the way your own house and big barn and great fields looked like little toy things that weren't of any account. It was because you could see so much more than just the. . . .

She heard a whine, and a cold nose was thrust into her hand! Why, there was old Shep begging for his share of waxed sugar. He loved it, though it did stick to his teeth so! She poured out another

lot and gave half of it to Shep. It stuck his jaws together tight, and he began pawing at his mouth and shaking his head till Betsy had to laugh. Then he managed to pull his jaws apart and chewed loudly, tossing his head, opening his mouth wide till Betsy could see the sticky brown candy all over his big white teeth and red throat. Then with a gulp he had swallowed it all down and was whining for more, striking softly at the little girl's skirt with his forepaw. "Oh, you eat it too fast!" cried Betsy, but she shared her next lot with him too. The sun had gone down over Hemlock Mountain by this time, and the big slope above her was all deep blue shadow. The mountain looked much higher now as the sun began to set, and rose bigger and bigger as though it reached to the sky. It was no wonder houses looked small from its top. Betsy ate the last of her sugar, looking up at the quiet giant there, towering above her. There was no lump in her throat now. Although she still thought she did not know what in the world Cousin Ann meant by saying that about Hemlock Mountain and her examinations, she had begun to understand.

She was just picking up her cup to take it back to the sap-house when Shep growled a little and stood with his ears and tail up, looking down the road. Something was coming down that road in the blue, clear twilight, something that was making a very queer noise. It sounded almost like somebody crying. It was somebody crying! It was a child crying. It was a little, little girl . . . Betsy could see her now . . . stumbling along and crying as though her heart would break. Why, it was little Molly, her own small charge at school, whose reading lesson she heard every day. Betsy and Shep ran to meet her. "What's the matter, Molly? What's the matter?" Betsy knelt down and put her arms around the weeping child. "Did you fall down? Did you hurt yourself? What are you doing 'way off here? Did you lose your way?"

"I don't want to go away! I don't want to go away!" said Molly over and over, clinging tightly to Betsy. It was a long time

before Betsy could quiet her enough to find out what had happened. Then she made out between Molly's sobs that her mother had been taken suddenly sick and had to go away to a hospital, and that left nobody at home to take care of Molly. She was to be sent away to some strange relatives in the city who didn't want her at all and who said so.

Elizabeth Ann knew all about that! Her heart swelled big with sympathy. For a moment she stood again out on the sidewalk in front of the Lathrop house with old Mrs. Lathrop's white head bobbing from a window, and knew again that terrible feeling of being unwanted. She knew why little Molly was crying! She shut her hands together hard and made up her mind that she would help her out.

Do you know what she did, right off without thinking about it? She didn't go and look up Aunt Abigail. She didn't wait till Uncle Henry came back from his round of emptying sap buckets into the big tub on his sled. As fast as her feet could carry her she flew back to Cousin Ann in the sugar-house. I can't tell you (except again that Cousin Ann was Cousin Ann) why it was that Betsy ran so fast to her and was so sure that everything would be all right as soon as Cousin Ann knew about it. But whatever the reason was it was a good one. Cousin Ann did not stop to kiss Molly or even to look at her more than one sharp first glance. She said after a moment's pause, during which she filled a syrup can and screwed the cover down very tight: "Well, if her folks will let her stay, how would you like to have Molly come and stay with us till her mother gets back from the hospital? Now you've got a room of your own, I guess you could have her sleep with you."

"Oh, Molly, Molly, Molly!" shouted Betsy, jumping up and down, and then hugging the little girl with all her might. "Oh, it will be like having a little sister!"

Cousin Ann sounded a dry, warning note: "Don't be too sure her folks will let her. We don't know about them yet."

Betsy ran to her, and caught her hand, looking up at her with shining eyes. "Cousin Ann, if you go to see them and ask them, they will!"

This made even Cousin Ann give a little smile of pleasure, although she made her face serious again at once and said: "You'd better go along back to the house now, Betsy. It's time for you to help Mother with the supper."

The two children trotted back along the darkening wood road, Shep running before them. Little Molly clung fast to the older child's hand. "Aren't you ever afraid, Betsy, in the woods this way?" she asked.

"Oh, no!" said Betsy, "there's nothing to be afraid of, except getting off on the wrong fork of the road, near the Wolf Pit."

"Oh, ow!" said Molly, shrinking. "What's the Wolf Pit? What a name!"

Betsy laughed. She tried to make her laugh sound brave like Cousin Ann's, which always made it seem silly to be afraid. As a matter of fact, she was beginning to fear that they had made the wrong turn, and she was not quite sure that she could find the way home. But she put this out of her mind and walked along very fast, looking ahead into the woods. "It hasn't anything to do with wolves," she said in answer to Molly's question. "Anyhow, not now. It's just a big, deep hole in the ground where a brook had dug out a cave . . . Uncle Henry told me all about it when he showed it to me . . . and then part of the roof caved in; sometimes there's ice in the corner of the covered part all the summer, Aunt Abigail says."

"Why do you call it the Wolf Pit?" asked Molly, walking very closely to Betsy and holding very tightly to her hand.

"Oh, long, ever so long ago, when the first settlers came up here, they heard a wolf howling all night. When it didn't stop in the morning, they came up here on the mountain and found a wolf had fallen in and couldn't get out."

"I hope they killed him!" said Molly.

"Gracious! That was more than a hundred years ago," said Betsy. She was not thinking of what she was saying. She was thinking that if they were on the right road they ought to be home by this time. She was thinking that the right road ran downhill to the house all the way, and that this certainly seemed to be going up a little. She was wondering what had become of Shep. "Stand here just a minute, Molly," she said. "I want . . . I just want to go ahead a little bit and see . . . and see . . ." She darted on around a curve of the road and stood still, her heart sinking. The road turned there and led straight up the mountain!

For just a moment the little girl wanted to scream for Aunt Frances, and to run crazily away, anywhere so long as she was running. But the thought of Molly standing back there, trustfully

waiting to be taken care of, shut Betsy's lips together hard before her scream of fright got out. She stood still, thinking. Now she mustn't get frightened. All they had to do was to walk back along the road till they came to the fork and then make the right turn. But what if they didn't get back to the turn till it was so dark they couldn't see it? . . . Well, she mustn't think of that. She ran back, calling, "Come on, Molly," in a tone she tried to make as firm as Cousin Ann's. "I guess we have made the wrong turn after all. We'd better. . . ."

But there was no Molly there. In the brief moment Betsy had stood thinking, Molly had disappeared. The long, shadowy road held not a trace of her.

Then Betsy *was* frightened and then she *did* begin to scream, at the top of her voice, "Molly! Molly!" She was filled with terror, and started back quickly to hear Molly's voice. Very faint, it seemed to come from the ground.

"Ow! Ow! Betsy! Get me out!"

"Where are you?" called Betsy.

"I don't know!" came Molly's sobbing voice. "I just moved the least little bit out of the road, and slipped on the ice and began to slide and I couldn't stop myself and I fell down into a deep hole!"

Betsy's head felt as though her hair were standing up straight on end with horror. Molly must have fallen down into the Wolf Pit! Yes, they were quite near it. She remembered now that big whitebirch tree stood right at the place where the brook tumbled over the edge and fell into it. She was dreadfully afraid of falling in herself. She went carefully over to this tree, feeling her way with her foot to make sure she did not slip. Then she peered down into the gloomy depths below. Yes, there was Molly's little face, just a white speck. The child was crying, sobbing, and holding up her arms to Betsy.

"Are you hurt, Molly?"

"No, I fell into a big snowbank, but I'm all frozen and I want to get out."

Betsy held on to the birch tree. Her head whirled. What should she do! "Look here, Molly," she called down, "I'm going to run back along to the right road and back to the house and get Uncle Henry. He'll come with a rope and get you out!"

At this Molly's crying rose to a scream. "Oh, Betsy, don't leave me here alone! Don't! Don't! The wolves will get me! Betsy, don't leave me alone" The child was wild with fear.

"But I can't get you out myself!" screamed back Betsy, crying herself. Her teeth were chattering with the cold.

"Don't go! Don't go!" came up from the darkness of the pit in a howl. Betsy made a great effort and stopped crying. She sat down on a stone and tried to think. And this is what came into her mind as a guide: "What would Cousin Ann do if she were here? She wouldn't cry. She would think of something."

Betsy looked around her. The first thing she saw was the big limb of a pine tree, broken off by the wind, which leaned against a tree a little distance above the mouth of the pit. It had been there so long that the needles had dried and fallen off, and the shape of the limb with its broken branches looked like . . . yes, it looked like a ladder! That was what Cousin Ann would have done!

"Wait a minute! Wait a minute, Molly," she called wildly down the pit, warm all over in excitement. "Now, listen. You go off there in a corner, where the ground makes a sort of roof. I'm going to throw down something you can climb up on, maybe."

"Ow! Ow, it'll hit me!" cried poor little Molly, more and more frightened. But she scrambled off under her shelter, while Betsy struggled with the branch. It was so firmly frozen in the snow that at first she could not move it all. But after she cleared that away and tugged at it, she bore down with all her might, throwing her weight on it again and again. Finally, she felt the big branch move. After that it was easier, as its course was downhill over the snow to the mouth of the pit. With great effort, Betsy dragged the branch to the pit. It took all her strength to shove it over the edge. It went down sharp end first and stuck fast in the snow. She was so out of breath with her work that for a moment she could not speak. Then, "Molly, there! Now climb up to where I can reach you."

Molly climbed like a squirrel, up from one stub to another to the top of the branch. She was still below the edge of the pit there, but Betsy lay flat down on the snow and held out her hands. Molly took hold hard, and, digging her toes into the snow, slowly worked her way up to the surface of the ground.

It was then, at that very moment, that Shep came bounding up to them, barking loudly, and after him Cousin Ann with a lantern in her hand and an anxious look on her face.

She stopped short and looked at the two little girls, covered with snow, and at the black hole gaping behind them. "I always told Father we ought to put a fence around that pit," she said in a matter-of-fact voice. "Some day a sheep's going to fall down there. Shep came along to the house without you, and we thought most likely you'd taken the wrong turn."

Betsy was very upset. She wanted to be petted and praised for

her courage. She wanted Cousin Ann to know. If Aunt Frances were only there, she would know!

"I fell down in the hole, and Betsy wanted to go and get Mr. Putney but I wouldn't let her, and so she threw down a big branch and I climbed out," explained Molly, who, now that her danger was past, took Betsy's action quite as a matter of course.

"Oh, that was how it happened," said Cousin Ann. She looked down the hole and saw the big branch. She looked back at the long trail of crushed snow where Betsy had dragged it. "Well, now, that was quite a good idea for a little girl to have," she said. "I guess you'll do to take care of Molly all right."

She spoke in her usual voice and at once drew the children after her, but Betsy's heart was happy as she trotted along holding Cousin Ann's strong hand. Now she knew that Cousin Ann understood her. She trotted fast, smiling to herself in the darkness.

"What made you think of doing that?" asked Cousin Ann, as they reached the house.

"Why, I tried to think what you would have done if you'd been there," said Betsy.

"Oh!" said Cousin Ann. "Well. . . ."

She didn't say another word, but Betsy, looking up into her face as they stepped into the lighted room, knew that she had pleased Cousin Ann.

That night, as she lay in her bed, her arm over Molly, she remembered, dimly, that she had failed in an examination that afternoon.

How Marilyn Swam The Lake

The day that sixteen-year-old Marilyn Bell swam across Lake Ontario was a cold, sunny ninth of September. The small, tousle-haired Toronto school girl swam forty miles from a log retaining wall in Youngstown, New York, to a concrete breakwater off Sunnyside and thus became the first swimmer to cross Lake Ontario, collecting some fifty thousand dollars in contracts, prizes, and gifts from Canadians who were moved by her courage.

Wednesday night at ten-thirty Marilyn climbed into a loose black silk and nylon suit bearing the crest of the Toronto Lakeshore Swimming Club. Jack Russell, operator of the life-boat that was to guide her across the lake, gave her a lucky four-leaf clover and she wrapped it in wax paper, put it on top of her blonde hair and pulled a white cap over it. She was ready.

At seven minutes after eleven she slipped off her robe, kissed her parents goodbye, walked to the edge of the Coast Guard lawn and dove off the sea wall. She started off rapidly, like a sprint swimmer. For a while the searchlight shone on her, then she was lost in the blackness of the night.

This was the part Marilyn had feared most, swimming in darkness for the first time in her life. Ahead of her she could see only the flashlight held in her boat by Gus Ryder, her trainer. Ahead of her, beyond the falling and climbing water, was the white pencil of a searchlight from the Canadian National Exhibition that burned all night as a guide to the swimmers.

What Gus Ryder called the crisis came about four in the morning. Marilyn, exhausted from fighting the twelve-foot-high waves, stopped swimming and looked pleadingly at Ryder.

"I'm cold, I'm numb," she called.

"Marilyn," he shouted back. "You've lasted through the night. If you can do that, you can do the rest. In another hour the sun will come up."

He fastened a paper cup into a ring at the end of a six-foot stick, poured corn syrup into the cup and passed it to the girl. She stood in the water, treading lightly to keep afloat. She sipped the nourishing drink and tried not to cry. After a moment she let the paper cup float away in the darkness and started swimming again.

When dawn came, Marilyn was fourteen miles into the lake. Ten feet away from her was the twenty-four foot lifeboat steered by Jack Russell and carrying Gus Ryder, a reporter-photographer and a thirteen-year-old boy, Peter Willinsky, whose father owned the boat.

As the sky lightened, everyone in the boat was shocked by Marilyn's appearance. She said later, "My arms were tired, my legs ached, and I couldn't get my breath. I wanted to quit."

For more than an hour she had been swimming with her arms alone, dragging her legs in the water behind her.

The reporter noticed that she was crying. He said, "If it had been my decision, I'd have taken her out of the water there and then!"

Ryder passed Marilyn more corn syrup, but her hand was shaking so much that the cup spilled into the water. Next he passed her some liniment he had scooped out of a jar and dropped into a paper cup. Under his direction she rolled over on her back and rubbed her legs. After a while she stopped crying and as the sun began to climb she was swimming strongly.

The water temperature, which can be a bitter 50, even on a late summer day, kept between sixty and seventy, and remained one factor in Marilyn's favour that day. Though her navigators were unaware of it at first, currents were pushing her west of Toronto. At half past ten the trainer noticed Marilyn tiring again.

With praise and encouragement from the boat, she swam with renewed vigour. Towards noon, when she faltered, blackboard notes from the boat again restored her courage.

At four o'clock in the afternoon it seemed doubtful whether she could finish. She had been in the water for seventeen hours and had not slept in thirty-one hours. The Toronto Harbour Commission, concerned that she might drown before anyone could reach her, dropped two dinghies into the water with lifeguards at the oars, and they began to row beside her, watching her steadily.

As she swam, relaxing her arm when it was in the air and pulling it hard through the water, relaxing the other and pulling, relax and pull and kick, kick, kick, kick—she began to fall asleep.

"Marilyn! Marilyn!" she heard a voice shouting.

She opened her eyes and read the blackboard message: Seven thousand five hundred dollars if you finish!

"Keep going! You can make it!" called the coach.

Joan Cooke, Marilyn's best friend and another member of the Lakeshore Swimming Club, was brought to the scene. This proved to be good strategy. Towards five o'clock Marilyn began to falter again. Her legs no longer hurt. They had no feeling at all—but the pain in her stomach was steady. Gus Ryder asked Joan to jump in and swim beside her. The splash of Joan's dive awoke Marilyn, who had been dozing again. Joan called briskly,

"Come on, Marilyn, let's go."

Marilyn's stroke picked up and a tiny flutter of white water behind her showed that her feet were kicking. Joan stayed in the

water a few minutes more, then climbed back into the boat and wrapped herself in blankets.

At five o'clock the coach pointed to the Toronto sky line and wrote on the blackboard: "WE ARE TAKING YOU STRAIGHT IN."

In spite of this, Marilyn's stroke slowed from the sixty-four strokes per minute that she maintained at her best, to fifty strokes a minute. The wind grew stiffer and colder and the waves pushed her west of the pink flares popping over the exhibition.

Newsmen covering the swim were beginning to realize they hadn't slept for two days and a night and they watched the girl in the water with wonder. As the afternoon wore out, Ryder huddled in his jacket in the stern of the boat. Everyone watched the rise and fall of the white arms in the water, the bathing cap that turned and became a gray face gulping air, then a bathing cap again.

At six thirty-five, Marilyn stopped swimming and stood up, treading water. She said, "I'm tired. I can't go any farther!"

Ryder called, "Fifteen minutes more, Marilyn! Come on!"

Like an obedient child, Marilyn put her face in the water and started swimming. She had the feeling that she was far away, floating into space.

Once again she stopped and was given the last of the eight pounds of corn syrup and the package of uncooked pablum the coach had brought.

"Do you want to come out?" he asked, when he saw her face.

But she started to swim, knowing that if she stopped now she would be finished. She did not pause again.

The coach guided her in toward Sunnyside. It was dusk, and the buildings, the boats, the sky and the water were varying shades of blue. It became so cold that the men in the boats shivered. The following boats showed running lights. The moon shone brighter.

At seven fifty Ryder's hoarse voice could be heard shouting,

"Come on, Marilyn, ten minutes more!"

A voice called to him:

"When your boat touches the sea wall, bring her right here!"

Ryder turned on his flashlight. The darkness along the shore ahead turned out to be thousands of people, shouting encouragement and cheering. A launch owner pushed on his horn and the fleet of boats unleashed a roar of horns, whistles and sirens. Marilyn swam in to the breakwater alone. She touched it with her left hand and stopped.

It was six minutes after eight; she had been in the water twenty hours and fifty-nine minutes. The lake is thirty-two miles across, but she had swum forty miles or more, fighting currents.

Marilyn Bell can't remember touching the breakwater. Ryder's boat came beside her and she was suddenly aware of the shouting thousands and saw rockets bursting in the sky.

"Are these people crazy or am I?" she whispered as Bryant and Ryder pulled her from the water. They, too, were weakened after twenty-one hours on constant watch.

Marilyn was hugged by her parents, drank a cup of hot chocolate, and was put to bed.

This is the story of how Marilyn swam Lake Ontario—a girl who became devoted to swimming when she was nine and a marathon swimmer when she was ten. She was the kind of daughter most parents hope for—a good student, sensible, courteous, and honest. Her one personality problem was stubbornness. Gus Ryder, who became her swimming coach when she was ten, called that stubbornness "courage", the courage a great marathoner must have.

The Magic Shop

The Montreal Directory is a big book, and it lists the names of a great many streets and a great many people. Nowhere does it mention Ariel Street, and nowhere does it list the name of J. Wellington Oberon.

Still, once upon a time and not so long ago, a boy and a girl and a dog found themselves on Ariel Street in Montreal and they met J. Wellington Oberon.

This is their story.

The girl was named Denise, the boy was named Dick, and they were brother and sister. The dog was named Woofle, because he said "Woof" and was the colour of a well-done waffle.

Mr. Benton's birthday was very close at hand and his two children were wondering what to get for him.

One night after dinner, while Mr. Benton was reading his newspaper, he helped Denise solve her problem.

"Oh, my! Oh, my!" said Mr. Benton. "I see uranium has been found at Elliot Lake. Now if I only had a magic wand, I could have uranium discovered on our property."

This sounded as though it might be fun, although Denise didn't know what her father meant. It seems Mr. Benton had put a good deal of money into a new mine, but as yet no uranium had been produced. Unless the new mine produced soon, Mr. Benton could easily lose all the money he had put into the mine. If uranium were found, however, he could make a lot of money.

A magic wand, though! What a wonderful birthday present that would be! But where in Montreal could you buy one? Denise and Dick asked everyone they knew, and no one could tell them.

Mr. Benton's birthday came nearer and nearer, and Denise and Dick became sadder and sadder as their search for the perfect present seemed to be hopeless. Woofle, a friendly dog, tried to be as sad as they were, but his attention was always taken up by cats.

Then, on the last day but one, the three of them were riding in the Benton car, driven by John, the chauffeur. Suddenly John saw a very bad traffic jam ahead, and turned into a side street. He drove along this street for a while, then turned left, then right, then left again. Each street he took was narrower, and finally he was driving along a very narrow street indeed. The street was paved with stones and there were lots of funny little shops side by side.

John looked out, first at one side, then at the other, and he frowned and realized that he had never seen this street before.

"Where are we, John?" Dick asked.

John didn't quite know how to answer. "We're somewhere near Westmount," he guessed.

"Stop! Stop!" cried Dick.

John slammed on the brakes.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Look, Denise!" said Dick. "Look over there!"

Denise looked, and her eyes brightened. Over the door of

one of the funniest little shops on the street, a slight breeze was rocking a sign that read: "THE MAGIC SHOP". And in the shop window another sign, written in tall scrolled letters, read:

We have complete stock of

Charms for Conjurors

Hocus-Pocus for Harlequins

Articles for Arch Images

Raiment for Rare Shows

Magic Wands for Many Occasions

Stuff for Sorcerers

Open Every Century Until Closed

J. Wellington Oberon

PROPRIETOR

"Will you wait here, please, John?" asked Denise. "There's something we must buy."

"Yes, miss," said John.

"Woof!" said Woofle.

"Woofle wants to come, too," said Dick.

John opened the front door of the car, and Woofle bounded out and joined the children.

Denise was already opening the door. A bell tinkled somewhere far away. Woofle sniffed, but everything seemed to smell all right, and he squeezed in ahead of them.

The first thought that Denise had was that if she stayed here in this shop for months she would still not be able to see all the wonderful things on the counters and shelves.

Woofle suddenly started to bark in a low tone, not friendly, but willing to be fierce if the need arose. He barked, and sniffed, and barked again, and he was looking straight up toward the ceiling. Denise looked, too, and drew a short, sharp breath.

"Dick!" she whispered. She took his arm and said, "Up there!"

Dick looked.

Floating in the air near the ceiling was a large and many-coloured carpet, and over the edge a small, pert brown face was watching them with a grin.

"Er . . . how do you do?" said Denise.

The grin widened. "I do and I do and I do," said the carpet's passenger. "How do I do what?"

"How do you stay up there?" asked practical Dick.

"That's easy," said the boy. "I just stay on the carpet."

"How does the carpet stay up there, then?"

"Why shouldn't it? It stays up because I told it to."

Is it a Magic Carpet?" asked Denise.

"Everything in the shop is magic," said the floating boy, waving a thin brown arm. "Everything."

Denise felt that it was time to get down to business, even though this strange boy showed no signs of getting down to anything.

"Do you have magic wands?" she asked.

"All kinds of them," the boy said.

"We would like to buy one."

The carpet moved back and forth for a moment, then swooped smoothly to the floor beside them. The boy, who was smaller than Dick, but whose face looked much older, stepped off and walked behind the counter.

"Here's just the thing," said the boy, popping up from behind the counter with a thin white stick. "Used by experts. Take it right home."

"We'd like to try it first," said Denise. "May we?"

"Well . . ." said the boy. "If you must, I suppose. . . ."

He handed the wand to Denise. She waved it over a small doll house on the floor.

"Presto change," she said, "to a pair of roller skates!"

With the sound of thunder, the doll house vanished and in its place there appeared a huge oak tree whose topmost branches scraped the ceiling.

"Oh, dear," said Denise, sighing.

"You didn't cross your fingers," said the brown boy.

"You didn't tell me I should," retorted Denise. "Which fingers?"

"Oh, it's always the same," said the boy. "The second and third fingers of the right hand."

She did as he said and waved the wand again. "Presto change back to a doll house!" she said.

Again the thunder rolled, and a green frog as big as a kitchen stool appeared, croaking sadly. Woofle darted behind the counter.

"What did I do then?" Denise asked.

"It's what you didn't do," the boy replied calmly. "You didn't stand on one foot, you didn't count up to a hundred by tens, you didn't wave the wand up and down and then around, and you weren't wearing a pink dress. Anyone would think you had never used a magic wand before."

A door slammed in the back of the shop and a tall, lean man, with flowing white hair and a small beard, came toward them.

"What is happening out here?" he cried. "It's no good hiding behind that counter, Puck! Come out, my boy, and come out fast!"

The boy came smiling sheepishly.

"I've told you always to ring for me when people visit the shop," said the man. "We're here to help people, not to play foolish tricks on them. Now get rid of this terrible green creature!"

Puck grinned again at Denise and Dick, pulled at a lock of his raven-black hair, and said, waving a hand at the frog: "Gofroggogo-gofordorfog!"

The frog disappeared and Puck darted into the back of the shop.

"He doesn't mean any harm," said the man. "It's just his way."

"Are you the owner?" asked Dick.

"I am J. Wellington Oberon, always at your service."

Mr. Oberon smiled, and Denise thought that outside of her daddy's it was the nicest smile she had ever seen.

"You came in because you wanted to buy a magic wand, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Denise.

"Well, I must tell you that nothing in the Magic Shop is for sale."

He saw the change from hope to disappointment in the

children's faces and added quickly: "No, no. Every article in our stock is made for just one customer and it's given to him when he comes, without charge."

He went behind the counter, opened a drawer, and brought out a long silver box. He opened this box, and put it into Denise's hands. In the whitest cotton lining lay a thin stick of some shining metal that flashed green and gold.

"A really royal birthday present," mused Mr. Oberon, stroking his beard. "My brother had it made especially for the Duke of Athens as a wedding gift. The Duke's butler lost it, and then the savages came, and naturally we couldn't let them have it . . . so . . . I'll wrap it for you."

Denise watched as Oberon's long crooked fingers swiftly went about the business of wrapping.

"Do you have to cross your fingers when you use it?" she asked.

Oberon laughed. "Certainly not," he said. "That was one of Puck's jokes. And . . . . ."

An automobile horn blew in the street outside. Dick looked up towards the window.

"Yes?" said Denise and Dick. Woofle cocked his head on one side to listen.

"All the stock in this shop," said Oberon slowly, "including the magic wand, is white magic . . . magic for doing good. It is given only to those who will do good with it. If it gets into the hands of one who wishes to do bad deeds, it becomes black magic. Now do you see what I mean?"

The children and Woofle nodded, and Woofle said: "Clear as crystal. I couldn't have worded it so well myself."

"I have an enemy," Oberon continued. "His shop, which is on Caliban Street, deals in black magic only. You are not likely to meet him, for he almost never does business with children. But he must not be allowed to lay his hands on that magic wand."

"What does he look like?" asked Denise.

"What's his name?" asked Dick.

"What does he smell like?" asked Woofle.

"He has many shapes and many names," said Oberon. "And he has a smoky smell. The best thing to do is to keep the wand safely locked up when you're not using it, and to keep your eye on it when you are."

"We'll remember that," said Denise and Dick.

"And I'll bite him if he tries any tricks!" Woofle promised.

"Good! And now goodbye . . . bless you all . . . and give your father many happy returns from J. Wellington Oberon!"

When they came into the street again, darkness had really fallen. The children got into the back of the car and waved through the window to Oberon and the grinning face of Puck peering over Oberon's shoulder. Woofle hopped into the front seat with John. The motor started, John turned the headlights on, and the car moved slowly and carefully down Ariel Street, turned the corner, and passed out of sight of the Magic Shop.

To John's surprise, as soon as he had left the funny narrow street, he knew where he was, and they arrived in front of the Benton home only about fifteen minutes later. Denise and Dick got out, and Denise opened the front door so that Woofle could join them.

Woofle turned to John.

"Thank you for a very pleasant ride, John," he said, and jumped out, leaving the chauffeur staring. (Later that night, John told his wife that the heat had been too much for him . . . he'd been hearing things.)

Mr. Benton came home on the afternoon of his birthday at 4.30.

"That's the front door," said Mrs. Benson. "Father's here! Now, remember, when he comes into the dining room. . . ."

Denise and Dick nodded. Woofle wagged his tail and grinned at the candle-blazing birthday cake on the table. The dining room door opened, and there stood Mr. Benton.

"What's this?" he exclaimed. Every year he was surprised when he came into the dining room and found the cake and the presents and the family. The family was singing "Happy Birthday to You." "What's this? Well, if this isn't a surprise!" And then his jaw dropped and his eyes popped and his surprise was real.

Woofle was singing as loudly and as clearly as the others, not in Doggish but in English.

Mrs. Benton stopped singing and stared at Woofle, too.

"Happy birthday, Father!" cried Denise and Dick.

"And so," said Woofle gaily, "say all of us!"

"That's Woofle's birthday surprise," said Denise.

"He ate a magic biscuit," said Dick.

"But it'll wear off in a few days," said Denise.

Mr. Benton took off his glasses, cleaned them, put them on again, and then said, to Woofle, "Well, that's just fine."

Denise, who had been standing with her hands in back of her, now brought them forward.

"Happy birthday," she said again, as she handed the present to her father.

"Why, thank you, children!" said Mr. Benton.

He unwrapped the package, opened the silver box, and blinked at the glowing green-gold stick.

"Why," said Mrs. Benton, "it's a pencil, isn't it?"

"No, no," said Mr. Benton, as he took it out of the box and held it up. "It's not a pencil. There's no lead."

"It's a magic wand," Denise broke in.

"A magic wand," said Mr. Benton. "Well, well! Just what I wanted! Let's see if it works." And, laughing, he pointed the wand at the birthday cake. "Presto change!" he said.

With the sound of distant thunder, the birthday cake was gone and in its place there stood a pair of very old and very muddy boots.

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Benton.

"You have to say what you want things to change into," said Dick. "Otherwise there's no telling what might happen."

Since Mr. Benton seemed unable to say anything or do anything except stare at the boots, Dick took the wand, waved it at the boots, and said: "Presto change back to our birthday cake!"

The thunder rolled, the boots were gone, the cake came back.

"It's a real magic wand," said Denise.

"Yes," murmured Mr. Benton. "I can see that it is."

"Wherever did you find it?" asked Mrs. Benton.

"Mr. Oberon at the Magic Shop gave it to us," Denise answered. "And now, Father, you can do those things you were wanting to do for the uranium mine."

"Eh?" said Mr. Benton.

"About finding uranium on your property."

"Bless me!" said Mr. Benton. "So I can. But . . ." he frowned a little, "I wonder what effect that would have on the business of this country? I think I'd better think things over very carefully indeed before I use this wand on anything really important, like the mine."

Well, finally the family's first excitement over having both a magic wand and a talking dog faded, and besides, they were hungry, so they ate dinner. Then, until it was the children's bedtime, they all had fun changing things into other things and back again. They did so many amusing things that one thing was forgotten.

No one told Mr. Benton about the dealer in black magic.

Denise and Dick went right off to bed, and right off to sleep. Mrs. Benton went out to a bridge party. Mr. Benton went into the library to read. And Woofle went to the kitchen, where he fell asleep behind the stove.

The house was very quiet. The only sounds were the ticking of the clocks, Woofle growling as he dreamed, and Mr. Benton turning the pages of his book.

Then the doorbell rang.

"Yes," said Mr. Benton.

A young man with green eyes stood there with a notebook in his hand. "My name is Scoogins," he said. "I'm a reporter for the *Daily Globe*. We hear that you have a magic wand."

"I don't know how the newspapers find things out so quickly," said Mr. Benton. Suddenly he sniffed. The young man noticed this, and said quickly,

"I've just come from covering a story about a fire over on Adams Street."

"Oh," said Mr. Benton. "Well, I was given a magic wand. I suppose it is news. Won't you come in?"

"Thank you," said the young man with the green eyes.

Out in the kitchen Woofle's nose was moving from side to side. He sniffed. Yes, he could smell smoke!

Woofle came wide awake.

He ran from the kitchen to the dining room, and then to the hallway. He heard the sound of voices coming from behind a closed door. He put his ear to the crack.

"I'd like to see the wand," a strange voice was saying.

Woofle's ear came away from the crack and his nose went up to it. The hair on his back rose. Here the smoky smell was strongest. He backed away from the door, and ran upstairs as fast as he could. The door of Dick's bedroom was open. Woofle darted in.

"Dick!" said Woofle. "Wake up! Wake up quickly!"

Dick opened one eye.

"You've got to come at once," pleaded Woofle. "It's most important! If you don't. . ."

Now Dick was fully awake.

"What's the matter, Woofle?" he asked.

"Woof!" said Woofle.

The effect of the magic dog biscuits had worn off. And at what a time!

"Woof! Woof!" said Woofle. "Woof grrrrr woof!"

"Shhh!" said Dick softly. "You'll wake everyone up. Good night, Woofle."

And Dick went back to sleep!

Woofle ran downstairs. The front door was open. He hurried into the night, and raced around the corner of the house.

The night was warm, and the windows were open. This was good luck, and he was in time. Mr. Benton was just handing the magic wand to the young man. . . .

Woofle leaped. It was a big leap for such a little dog. He leaped into the window, seized the wand just as it was about to change hands, and fled with it like a streak into the outdoors again.

Woofle ran down the broad street as fast as his little legs would carry him. The magic wand was between his teeth, and he had one idea in his mind . . . to find a secret place and dig and dig and bury

the wand so deep that the man with the smoky smell could never find it.

He took one quick look behind him. Then he knew that he could not win. He saw the young man, still far away, suddenly change into a hound and come bounding forward, with smoke rising from his panting mouth.

Woofle began to run again. But now he sensed that something was flying in the air over his head.

Woofle dropped the wand and looked up, baring his teeth and ready for battle. Then his tail wagged.

Something was indeed flying over him. It was a carpet, and over its edge there looked a friendly brown face.

Puck leaped lightly to earth, grabbed the wand in his small brown fingers just as the greyhound came pounding up, pointed it at the beast and chanted: "Presto, presto, change to a lamp post!"

This time the thunder was very loud, and there was even a flash of lightning as well as much choking smoke, but when the noise was over, the hound had vanished and a tall iron lamp post stood firmly rooted in the middle of the street.

Puck went over to it, rapped it with the wand, and said, "Stay a lamp post forever!" Then he turned back to the tired but happy Woofle.

"That settles that!" said Puck.

"Woof woof," said Woofle.

"Oh," said Puck. He reached in a pocket. "You must be hungry after all that running." And he tossed Woofle a dog biscuit.

When Woofle had eaten it, he smiled and said, "Thank you. That tasted very good. By the way, will he always be a lamp post now?"

"I don't see why not," said Puck. "White magic's stronger than black magic any day in the year."

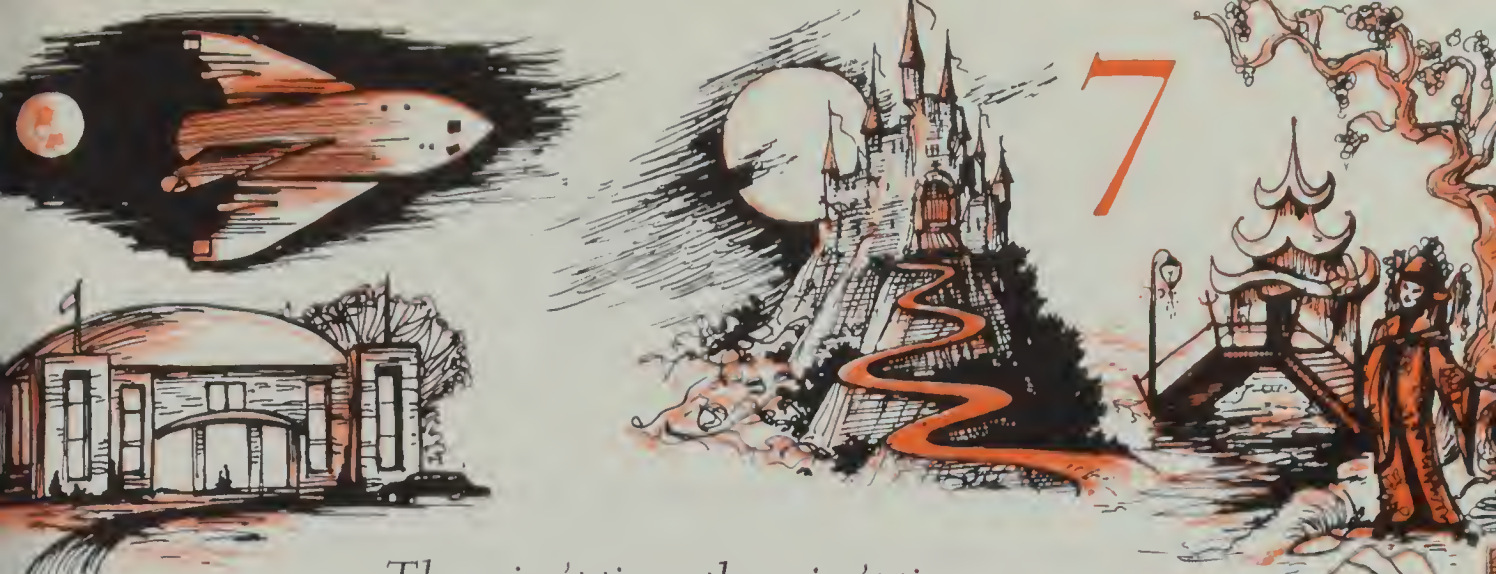
Woofle proudly took the wand back to the Benton house, and told Mr. Benton the whole story. Mr. Benton told him that he was

the best dog in the world, and that from that night forward he could eat his bones in any room of the house.

So Woofle is happy, and the Bentons are happy, and everyone in our story is happy.

With one exception.

Montreal has, on one of its streets, the saddest lamp post in the world.

If you look closely, you may see it.

There isn't time, there isn't time
To do the things I want to do,
With all the mountaintops to climb,
And all the woods to wander through,
And all the seas to sail upon,
And everywhere there is to go,
And all the people, every one
Who lives upon the earth, to know.

ELEANOR FARJEON

Anansi's Fishing Expedition

In the country of Ashanti, not far from the edge of the great West African forest, there was a man named Anansi, who was known to all the people for miles around. Anansi was not a great hunter, nor a great worker, nor a great warrior. He always tried to be clever. He liked to fool people. He liked to live well, and to have other people do things for him. But because all the people of the country knew about Anansi and had had trouble with him, he had to keep thinking of new ways to get something for nothing.

One day Anansi was sitting in the village when a man named Osansa came along.

"I have an idea," Anansi said. "Why don't we go and set fish traps together? Then we shall sell the fish and be quite rich."

But Osansa knew about Anansi, and so he said:

"No, I have as much food as I can eat or sell. I am rich enough. Why don't you set your fish traps by yourself?"

"Ha! Fish alone? Then I'd have to do all the work!" Anansi said. "What I need is a fool for a partner."

Osansa went away, and after a while another man named Anene came along.

"I have an idea," Anansi said. "Why don't the two of us go and set fish traps together? Then we shall sell the fish and be quite rich."

Anene knew Anansi very well, too, but he seemed to listen thoughtfully.

"That sounds like a fine idea," he said. "Two people can catch more fish than one. Yes, I'll do it."

The news went rapidly around the village that Anansi and Anene were going on a fishing trip together. Osansa met Anene in the market and said:

"We hear you are going to trap fish with Anansi. Don't you know he is trying to make a fool of you? He has told everyone that he needs a fool to go fishing with him. He wants someone to set the fish traps and do all the work, while he gets all the money for the fish."

"Don't worry, friend Osansa, I won't be Anansi's fool," Anene said.

Early the next morning Anansi and Anene went into the woods to cut palm branches to make their fish traps.

Anansi was busy thinking how he could make Anene do most of the work. But when they came to the place where the palm trees grew, Anene said to Anansi:

"Give me the knife, Anansi. I shall cut the branches for the traps. We are partners. We share everything. My part of the work will be to cut branches, your part of the work will be to get tired for me."

"Just a minute, let me think," Anansi said. "Why should I be the one to get tired?"

"Well, when there's work to be done someone must get tired," Anene said. "That's the way it is. So if I cut the branches you can get tired for me."

"Hah, you take me for a fool?" Anansi said. "Give me the knife. I shall cut the branches and you get tired for me!"

So Anansi took the knife and began cutting the branches from the trees. Every time he chopped, Anene grunted. Anene sat down in the shade and groaned, while Anansi chopped and hacked and sweated. Finally the wood for the fish traps was cut. Anansi tied it up into the big bundle. Anene got up from the ground holding his back and moaning.

"Anansi, let me carry the bundle of wood now, and you can get tired for me."

"Oh, no, my friend Anene," Anansi said, "I am not that simple minded. I'll carry the wood myself, and you can be tired for me."

So he lifted the bundle to the top of his head and the two of them started back to the village. Anene groaned all the way.

"Oh, oh!" he moaned. "Take it easy, Anansi! Oh, oh!"

When they came to the village Anene said:

"Let me make the fish traps, Anansi, and you just sit down and get tired for me."

"Oh, no," Anansi said. "You just keep on as you are." And he made the fish traps while Anene lay on his back in the shade with his eyes closed, moaning and groaning. He was so tired!

While he was making the traps, working in the heat with perspiration running down his face and chest, Anansi looked at Anene lying there being tired for him. He shook his head and clucked his tongue.

"Anene thinks he is so smart," he said to himself. "Yet look at him moaning and groaning there. He is tired out!"

When the fish traps were done, Anene climbed to his feet and said, "Anansi, my friend, now let me carry the fish traps to the water, and you can get tired for me."

"Oh, no," Anansi said. "You just come along and do your share. I'll do the carrying, you do the getting-tired."

So they went down to the water, Anansi carrying and Anene moaning. When they arrived, Anene said to Anansi:

"Now wait a minute, Anansi, we ought to think things over here. There are sharks in this water. Someone might get hurt. So let me go in and set the traps, and should a shark bite me, then you can die for me."

"Wah!" Anansi howled. "Listen to that! What do you take me for? I'll go in the water and set the traps myself, and if I am bitten, then you can die for me!" So he took the fish traps out into the water and set them, and then the two of then went back to the village.

The next morning when they went down to inspect the traps they found just four fish. Anene spoke first.

"Anansi, there are only four fish here. You take them. Tomorrow there will be more, and then I'll take my turn."

"Now what do you take me for?" Anansi said angrily. "Do you think I am simple-minded? Oh, no, Anene, you take the four fish and I'll take my turn tomorrow."

So Anene took the four fish and carried them to town and sold them.

Next day when they came down to the fish traps, Anene said:

"Look, there are only eight fish here. I'm glad it's your turn, because tomorrow there doubtless will be more."

"Just a minute," Anansi said. "You want me to take today's fish so that tomorrow you get a bigger catch? Oh, no, these are all yours, partner, tomorrow I'll take my share."

So Anene took the eight fish and carried them to town and sold them.

Next day when they came to look in the traps they found sixteen fish.

"Anansi," Anene said, "take the sixteen fish. Little ones, too. I'll take my turn tomorrow."

"Of course, you'll take your turn tomorrow, it's my turn today,"

Anansi said. He stopped to think. "Well, now, you are trying to make a fool out of me again! You want me to take these sixteen little fish so that you can get the big catch tomorrow, don't you? Well, it's a good thing I'm smart! You take the sixteen today and I'll take the big catch tomorrow!"

So Anene carried the sixteen fish to the market and sold them.

Next day they came to the traps and took the fish out. But by this time the traps had rotted in the water.

"Well, it's certainly your turn today," Anene said. "And I'm very glad of that. Look, the fish traps are rotten and worn out. We can't use them any more. I'll tell you what—you take the fish to town and sell them, and I'll take the rotten fish traps and sell them. The fish traps will bring a good price. What a wonderful idea!"

"Hm," Anansi said. "Just a moment, don't be in such a hurry. I'll take the fish traps and sell them myself. If there's such a good price to be had, why shouldn't I get it instead of you? Oh, no, you take the fish, my friend."

Anansi lifted the rotten fish traps up on his head and started off for town. Anene followed him, carrying the fish. When they arrived in the town, Anene sold his fish in the market, while Anansi walked back and forth singing loudly:

"I am selling rotten fish traps! I am selling wonderful rotten fish traps!"

But no one wanted rotten fish traps and townspeople were angry that Anansi thought they were so stupid they would buy them. All day long Anansi wandered through the town singing:

"Get your rotten fish traps here! I am selling wonderful rotten fish traps!"

Finally the head man of the town heard about it. He, too, became very angry, and he sent messengers for Anansi. When they brought Anansi to him, he asked angrily,

"What do you think you are doing, anyway? What kind of nonsense is this you are trying to put over the people of the town?"

"I'm selling rotten fish traps," Anansi said, "very good rotten fish traps."

"Now what do you take us for?" the chief of the town said. "Do you think we are foolish people? Your friend came and sold good fish, which the people want, but you come trying to sell something that isn't good for anything and just smell the town up with your rotten fish traps. You insult us!"

The head man turned to the townspeople who stood nearby, listening.

"Take him away and whip him," he said.

The men took Anansi out to the town gate and beat him with sticks. Anansi shouted and yelled and made a great noise. When at last they turned him loose, Anene said to him:

"Anansi, this ought to be a lesson to you. You wanted a fool to go fishing with you, but you didn't have to look so hard to find one. You were a fool yourself."

Anansi nodded his head.

"Yes," he said, rubbing his back and his legs where they had beaten him. And then he looked at Anene. "But what kind of partner are you? At least you could have taken the pain while I took the beating."

Circus Today

"Mama . . . Mama!" Peggy Washburn rushed in the back door, in her excitement scattering the mail she had just brought home, all over the floor. "The circus is in town . . . just for today! There's a big notice up in the Post Office. They had to skip a couple of places 'count of floods. Oh, mama . . . can I go? It's never been here before!"

There was a howl from her brother Bud. "And never will be again, most likely!" he cried. "It would have to be the same day as our Scout hike."

"So we can't go," finished Les, his twin, sadly. "What a gyp."

"Well, I can go, can't I?" Peggy started to pick up the scattered mail.

Mama hesitated.

"I don't see how," she said. "I counted on you to stay with Susan. The boys have been at me for weeks to go on the hike and see them do their stunts, and it's too long a day for a two-year-old."

For the life of her, Peggy couldn't keep the tears from her eyes.

"Couldn't we get a baby sitter . . . just this once?" she pleaded.

"Well . . ." mama said, and then Les cut in.

"Try and get one . . . between the hike and the circus everyone in town will be busy."

And so it proved. So it fell to Peggy to take over Susan and it looked like a long dull day ahead. She didn't know quite how disappointing it was till, hearing strange music, she ran out on the screened porch. It sounded like a parade, and suddenly she knew. It was the circus!

She hadn't dreamed it would pass so close to home, or she

might at least have put Susan in her stroller and gone down to watch it. Well . . . it was too late now. Already the exciting band music was growing fainter as the parade passed the corner and turned down Central Street.

She heard Susan calling her and went inside. The baby was just waking up from her nap. She held out her arms to her big sister, her wide blue eyes smiling.

"Up-up!" she said, and Peggy lifted her from her crib and took her down to the kitchen where she sat her in the high chair, and gave her some dinner. Then she fixed a sandwich for herself, and with a glass of milk, she sat down at the kitchen table. She stared out of the window as she ate. It seemed very quiet for a Saturday . . . she guessed everyone had gone somewhere.

"Down-down!" ordered Susan. Peggy washed her sticky hands and put her in her playpen. Just then the phone rang. It was Mrs. Smithers, who lived a few doors below on the same street. She sounded excited.

"Peggy, are you all alone with the baby?" she asked .

"Yes'm, I am," Peggy answered her, surprised. "Why?"

"Well, don't you go outdoors. It just came over the radio that one of the circus lions has escaped from its cage."

"My goodness!" gasped Peggy. "How did that happen?"

"The cage tipped over somehow just as the parade was turning the corner . . . just below here . . . no telling how savage it is, and it might come this way. Don't you take the baby out till they capture it, will you?"

"No, indeed," Peggy promised. She replaced the phone with shivers chasing up and down her spine. A live lion! He wouldn't come as close to houses as this, most likely. Still . . . she'd better go out and hook the porch screen door. The hook was loose and it was always coming open.

She trotted out to the front of the house. She opened the front door and threw both her hands to her face to stop a scream. She

was looking straight into the eyes of a huge brown beast whose head, carried low, was on a level with her own. They stood, staring at each other. For a minute Peggy simply couldn't move. Then, scarcely knowing what she was about, she shoved the door shut, and stood leaning against it, drawing in her breath with a sob. After what seemed a long time, she stopped shaking enough to turn the key in the lock.

She listened. Hearing nothing, she tiptoed to the window. Maybe he had gone. No. The huge beast had moved to the end of the porch, and was padding about softly, sniffing.

What shall I do? Peggy asked herself wildly. She saw the screen door was open. That, of course, was how he had got in. If only she could in some way get it closed. Then he would be a prisoner and she could telephone to . . . well, whom do you get hold of when a lion comes to call on you? The police or the radio station or somebody . . . the circus people must be looking everywhere for him.

Watching the lion, she wondered, was he so very dangerous? He didn't appear so. As she watched him, he lifted his head and stood staring out toward the street. There was a faraway look in his eyes, and suddenly Peggy felt almost sorry for him. Was he longing for the jungle from which they had taken him, and hating being in a town where there were houses and people? He looked

like a young lion . . . his coat was smooth and shiny and he had no mane. Perhaps he had been born in the circus and had never known the freedom of the world outside. All at once he yawned, and seeing his sharp white teeth, Peggy shivered. Well . . . what was she going to do about him? Now his tail, as thick around as her arm, was switching back and forth a little.

Suddenly, with a feeling that turned her knees to jelly, Peggy knew what she should do. She must sneak around the house from the back and close that porch door. But suppose while she was running round the house the lion took it into his head to go down the steps and she met him again face to face!

Still trembling, she walked out to the kitchen. Susan was playing happily with her blocks. But was she safe? Could a lion leap right through a window? Peggy guessed he could if he was hungry enough, maybe. She wondered if he was hungry, and thought of the roast mama had bought for Sunday dinner, which was in the refrigerator. No! It was the first roast beef they had had in weeks and she wasn't going to pass it out to any old lion.

She looked around for something with which to tie the screen door and saw her skipping rope lying on a chair. She snatched it up and let herself out the back door as silently as a wisp of smoke. She tiptoed around the corner of the house and came in sight of the front porch. Suppose he smelled her and was hungry! She wished she had brought the roast beef along just in case . . . better that should be a meal for a hungry lion than Peggy Washburn!

The pounding of her heart quieted a little when she saw His Majesty was still at the end of the porch. He turned his head quickly toward her as she stumbled up the steps and pulled the door shut. Then he started slowly toward her, padding softly on his big feet. He watched her, seeming almost interested in what she was doing.

Now she could feel those wild eyes boring into her, with only the flimsy screen door between them, as she pushed the skipping rope through the door handle and tied the ends to the iron railing.

She could smell the strong animal smell now, too. But he didn't move and she didn't wait. She tore around the house and whipped inside. Weak with relief she shut and bolted the back door.

Now for the telephone. Her hands were still shaking as she fumbled through the phone book. Then, remembering what Daddy had taught her, she dialed the operator and said,

"Police, quick—emergency!"

A minute later she was telling her story to a man at the other end of the line, talking so fast she had to tell it all over before he could understand her. When he did, he said in a kindly voice,

"All right. Just sit tight, sister . . . we'll be right with you."

Peggy replaced the phone and drew a long breath. She went to peek out the window again. The lion was lying down quietly, his head on his paws.

Presently a police car drove up. Two men in uniform got out. Seeing Peggy in the window, one of them waved to her. Close behind was a huge truck and on it was a cage with an open door. Four men in circus uniforms climbed down off the truck and approached the house. Peggy saw the lion stiffen and switch his tail.

One of the men had a long pole with a sharp metal point. How were they going to capture the lion? Peggy wondered. Oh, she hoped they wouldn't have to hurt him. After all, he had been a good lion.

It wasn't as hard as she had thought. Two of the men backed the truck up to the steps and slid the cage partway out so it was against the screen door. They untied that so it was open.

The other two men came around through the house. They opened the door onto the porch and stepped out. The policemen stood guard outside.

"Come on, old fellow," one of the circus men said in a quiet voice. The lion got to his feet. He stared at the men, and then, either because he smelt something he liked or he was tired of his freedom,

as meek as meek, he came across the porch and through the door into his cage. The men locked it and slid it back onto the truck.

"Just wait until I tell Bud and Les," gloated Peggy, waving goodbye to the policemen. "Will they ever be surprised and mad to hear what they missed!"

And so they were. The hike had been fun. But a lion, loose . . . right on their front porch! Jeepers! They were still talking about it at supper when the front door bell rang.

Bud went and came back with a big man with a kind, sunburned face.

"I'm Bill Trumbull," he introduced himself. "I own the circus. I want to meet the little lady who wasn't afraid to face up to a lion."

"You showed a pretty cool head," he told Peggy, shaking her hand. "That lion isn't very wild. But you couldn't know that . . . nor anyone else."

"I was pretty scared," she said.

"I don't wonder," Mr. Trumbull said. "Well, it caused a big panic around town and scared 'most everyone from coming to the circus this afternoon. Besides, the road is still blocked to our next big stop, so we've decided to stop over here a few days longer."

He pulled an envelope from his pocket.

"Here's a little something to show we appreciate what you did. A lion is a costly animal. It would have cost us plenty if he had got himself really lost or had been shot by some nervous person." He handed the envelope to Peggy.

"Oh, thank you," she said, and opened it. Inside were a whole handful of circus tickets. "Thank you, Mr. Trumbull," she said again, her eyes shining. "But I didn't need all those."

Mr. Trumbull waved his hand.

"That's O.K.," he said. "You can take all your friends. And wait a minute." He took a pad of paper from his pocket and wrote something on it. "Show this wherever you go inside the big tent and

you and your friends can have all the popcorn and pink lemonade you can eat. It's on the house."

"Well!" said Les, when Mr. Trumbull had left and the Washburns sat looking at each other. "Will you have something to tell Daddy when he gets home! I'll say it was a lucky day after all for us when that big cat decided to call at our house. That right, Peg?"

But Peggy wasn't listening. She was counting on her fingers how many of her friends she could take to the circus with her.

The Sun Princess

A very long time ago, there lived a beautiful princess in a tiny kingdom no bigger than one of our cities. Although it was small it was a happy place for the king was very wise. He could not stay in his palace but walked daily among his people to share both their laughter and their tears. He was a tall man and he walked with dignity. His people respected him, but they did not fear him. Everywhere he went the children would approach him shyly and smile, while their parents waited eagerly for his questions about their business or their health. When a man became too old to work, the king was always able to find a warm fireside for him to sit by. When a young man showed ability, the king could always find some position where the young man could serve his people and win honour for himself. When times were good and the harvest plentiful, the king urged his people to put aside a quantity of food for the lean times ahead. When times were hard he used the royal treasury to help those who suffered. Is it any wonder that in this tiny kingdom the people loved the king who loved them?

But if the king loved his people so, who can put into words the love he felt for his only child, the Princess Flavia? The people of the court called her the Sun Princess for, as they said, whenever she entered a room it was as if the sun had suddenly come from behind a cloud. Now, whether it was because her hair was fair as beaten gold or whether it was her smile that warmed the heart of everyone who gazed on her, I do not know, but beautiful she was and as good and kind as her father, the King. You must not think that she was the silly kind of princess who sits all day spinning and dreaming of the day her prince will come. She was not like that at all. She was

as curious as a kitten. Early morning would often find her in the kitchen watching the way the giant spits turned, roasting the beef for lunch, or out in the gardens watching the petals of the flowers unfold toward the rising sun. Some days she would sit in the leafy fragrant shade and watch the plows turn the moist black earth in long furrows. She would be at hand when the young girls of the kingdom trod the purple grapes in the huge vats. Her laughter would ring out with theirs and when she was sure none of the elder members of the court was present, she too would kick off her shoes and join the others trampling the grapes until her legs were stained purple and she was weak with laughter.

Whenever illness struck a cottage she would be there soothing fevered heads with her cool hands and soft words. Even fretting babies stopped their cries when she raised them from their cribs and rocked them in her arms. If the people of the village loved and respected the king, they adored his daughter, their Sun Princess.

So life continued in this pleasant kingdom for many years. The king grew older and the Princess grew in beauty and understanding until one day the thing happened that everyone dreaded, the king most of all. A trumpeter in blue and gold appeared in the town square before the palace, raised his long horn to his lips and loosed peal after peal that found their way to even the remotest corner of this tiny kingdom. When all the people had assembled, including the king and fair Flavia, the trumpeter announced in ringing tones that the Prince of Europe and his retinue would be the guests of the king for the next week, and that the Prince had heard of the great beauty and charm of the Princess Flavia, and that he wished to see if she would be suitable for his bride.

At these words, an angry mutter rolled from the throats of the people. How could any man dare take the Sun Princess from them. But the mutter died quickly under the arrogant stare of the trumpeter, and in the knowledge that the Prince of Europe was a powerful man who commanded huge armies, and their kingdom

was so small. In the silence they looked at their princess who stood pale but composed, her head high. With great dignity the King answered the trumpeter, telling him that the kingdom would be honoured by the visit of the Prince of Europe.

The days passed quickly then because there was so much to do. Great herds of cattle were driven in from the countryside to be slaughtered and supply the food for the retinue of the Prince. All the cobblestones of all the streets were scrubbed and the fronts of the cottages cleaned. In the courtyard of the palace huge tents of silk were raised and piles of bedding laid ready for the guests.

The king watched all these preparations grimly, but the Princess moved swiftly and surely in all the bustle, directing everything for the comfort of the royal guests.

At last the day arrived. The retinue, which could be seen even at a great distance by the cloud of dust raised by the hooves of a thousand horses, appeared at the palace gates. The people of the kingdom had never seen such splendour, so many fine horses, beautiful clothes and such a rich display of jewelry. But the prince who led the gorgeous parade, what sort of man was he? Tall and stringy, with a high nose to which a perfumed handkerchief was constantly being applied, he looked uncomfortable on his prancing horse and under the gaze of the crowd. "Why, he is no man for our princess," the people thought! "Better the groom who walks at his side. He at least is a man and no perfumed popinjay."

When the procession reached the steps of the castle, the King and the Princess stood waiting, clothed in magnificent raiment. But that was not their Princess, this tall, dark girl with the haughty eyes and scornful mouth. This girl was beautiful, but it was the beauty of the moon which paled against the sun. Where was their Princess? She stood, eyes cast down, her glorious hair hidden by her plain headdress, among the servants. Now it was plain to even the slowest thinkers in this tiny kingdom. The princess had put another in her place. The crowd who had been so unhappy moments before, now bubbled with excitement. It was dangerous to fool a powerful ruler like the Prince but they would keep their Princess' secret if they died for it. And out of a thousand throats a cheer broke forth. The visitors looked a little surprised for they expected hostility but on one face among the Princess' servants a tiny smile appeared. She knew for whom the crowd cheered and it gave her courage.

When the royal parties had entered the banquet hall, the servants of both met and mingled. The Princess in disguise sought out the Prince's groom, for he was a comely youth and something about his manner caused a quickening of her heart. In the days that followed, these two met often in their duties. To the groom, who listened gravely, the Princess talked and talked about the kingdom and its people and he was amazed at her knowledge and kindness and completely captured by her fair beauty. Although he did not have much chance of talking to her—her talk ran on and on like a mountain stream—she felt him to be strong yet at the same time humble like her father. On the day before the Prince's retinue was to return to its own land, the Prince's groom asked the Princess' servant to be his wife and she smilingly agreed, but she warned him she had a secret she could not tell him until the morrow.

The last day of the visit dawned bright and clear and, as before, the whole kingdom assembled at the palace steps to watch the Prince's retinue return. All week the kingdom had hummed with rumours. Some said the Prince had fallen in love with the pretended

Princess. Others said he would have nought to do with her. Everyone felt that today the announcement would be made.

In the expectant hush, the King looked at the Prince and neither spoke. Then pushing forward from her place among the servants, the true Princess spoke. Though her voice was low and womanly it was clear and carried sweetly to the ears of those who strained to hear.

"Your Majesties," she said. "I have a confession to make. This beautiful girl who stood before you in the Princess' robes is not the Princess. She is a servant. And I who dress like a servant am not a servant, but the Princess Flavia, daughter to the King."

At this, the followers of the Prince began to mutter angrily at the insult to their powerful country, but as their Prince held up his hand, they ceased and the Princess Flavia went on.

"I love my father and this kingdom, Prince of Europe, and I had resolved never to leave them even if I must dare your wrath, and so I disguised myself as a servant. But this is not the greatest wrong I do you, Prince, for as a servant I met and loved your groom and wish to be his wife. I ask your forgiveness mighty Prince, and I ask my father's forgiveness also. If you are men of loving hearts you will grant me my desires."

And all the people there assembled were touched by her beauty and her courage and no man could deny her plea. But what could be done? A princess may not marry a groom nor can an insult to a country be allowed to pass. So the people stood in fear.

Then the groom stepped forward and the people craned their necks to look. They nodded their approval for he was a man. He walked slowly until he stood before the Princess and his serious face softened into a smile.

"Princess Flavia, whom men call the Sun Princess for her beauty, I, too, have a secret to reveal. That man who sits with handkerchief to nose is not the Prince, but only the Prince's groom. I am the Prince and while I had heard of your wondrous beauty, I

could not take a wife whose beauty cloaked an empty head and heart. As a groom I heard from all your people that you are as wise and kind as you are beautiful and I, too, lost my heart. Will you come with me and rule the Kingdom of Europe as my Queen?"

And the Princess placed her hand in his while the assembly laughed and cried or did both according to its mood while the two stood looking at each other lost to the world around them.

They married and they lived happily ever after. The Prince, it is true, became graver and more silent as the years went by because his Queen had presented him with daughters, three, and, as you can imagine, it was not easy to make himself heard over their gay chatter. Luckily he was quite content to look and listen.

And the little kingdom? When the good King died it became part of Europe and no one could find it today even if they knew where to look. I am sure though, that somewhere there is an old, old lady who tells her wide-eyed grandchildren the story of the Princess Flavia and her handsome groom.

A Dime's Worth For Free

Billy didn't mind arithmetic so much when it was just plain numbers, but in the book they were using this year, you never knew when you would come across a couple of feeble-minded people named A and B. In the beginning of the book, A was always buying potatoes by the bushel and selling them to B by the peck, and simple stuff like that; but along toward the end, they did harder things.

Today was the first really hot day of spring. The windows were open, letting in a lot of fine, interesting smells—and here were A and B again. This time they seemed to be messing around with a stream that had a current of three miles an hour.

Well, Billy could think of plenty of things that he and Fats could do with a stream like that on a day like this. But not Mr. A. and Mr. B. Oh, no! They had to get a couple of rowboats, one apiece, and start rowing away from each other.

Now Billy was supposed to figure out how far apart they would be after A had rowed upstream for fifty minutes, and B had rowed downstream for an hour and a quarter. As if anybody cared! Except maybe Miss Dowd! Because when she gathered the papers, nearly all the answers were different, and all of them were wrong.

Well, Miss Dowd just about had a fit. You might have thought she would put some of the blame where it belongs, on A and B. Or on the weather coming in the windows and making everybody just itch to get outside.

But no, she said that if this was the best they could do, perhaps they should just go back and have a good drill on their number facts. Then she filled the whole front blackboard with columns of figures, to be copied down and added up and turned in tomorrow morning.

At three o'clock, Billy and Fats left school in silence. The sun was still hot, and the breeze still smelled of wet dirt and somebody's plum tree in bloom, but the whole day was ruined.

"It'll take an hour, anyway, to do all that homework," said Billy, aiming a kick at a stone.

"Or two hours," said Fats.

"If not three," groaned Billy. He folded his homework paper as small as possible and stuck it in his pocket. His fingers found a dime he had forgotten about, and he fished it out.

Fats brightened up a little. "Say, let's go down to Schultz's and get a dime's worth of jellybeans," he said.

"Or a couple of dill pickles," said Billy.

"Jellybeans," said Fats, who had not earned his name on a diet of dill pickles.

Schultz's store was cool and dark and smelled of pies, peppermint and new magazines. Around the first of the month, there was always quite a crowd around the magazine rack; for two cents' worth of lemon drops, a fast reader could get through a dollar's worth of comics in an afternoon.

Mr. Schultz was always talking about it. Almost every day he said he would take the comics out, but he never did. Today, the place was empty. All the comics were old and limp-looking, and there wouldn't be any new ones in for at least a week.

"Well, gentlemen; what can I do for you?" asked Mr. Schultz, the way he always did.

Billy and Fats were still arguing. Dill pickles were two for a dime, but they were six cents apiece; so if Billy bought a dill pickle, Fats would only have four cents left for jellybeans.

On the other hand, as Billy pointed out, whose dime was it, anyway?

Then the phone rang and Mr. Schultz went to answer it; and after a minute Billy and Fats quit arguing to listen. Mr. Schultz's red face got redder and redder. He shouted so loud they couldn't

understand what he was saying, except that it was something about Emil. Emil was Mr. Schultz's grandson, who drove the truck.

Finally Mr. Schultz slammed the phone down, and put both hands up to his head, and groaned.

"What's the matter?" asked Billy in alarm. "Is Emil sick?"

"No!" roared Mr. Schultz. "But he will be, when I get hold of him! Twice, already, he parks the truck by a fireplug, and the police warn him. Now he does it again, and they take him to the station house, and the truck along with him. So now I got to go pay the fine before they let him go."

He took off his white apron and threw it on the floor, and jammed his hat on the back of his head. "If I don't go, who makes the afternoon deliveries? Nobody, that's who! So hurry up!" he shouted. "Pickles or jellybeans, but make up your minds. I got to lock up."

"Jellybeans," said Billy.

Mr. Schultz weighed them out on the candy scales, rang up the dime on the register, and shoved them toward the door.

It was then that Billy had his big idea. "Look, Mr. Schultz," he said, "we'll mind the store for you, won't we, Fats? I bet we know the price of everything in here. Don't we, Fats?"

"We ought to," mumbled Fats, with his mouth full of jellybeans.

Mr. Schultz rubbed his nose doubtfully.

"What's the matter?" asked Billy. "Don't you trust us with your money?"

"Sure, sure," said Mr. Schultz. "I know you boys. With my money I trust you, like my own self. But—" His eyes swept over the candy case, over the glass cases of spiced ham and cheese, the soft drink cooler.

"All right," he said finally. "And look, when I get back I give you a dime's worth for free, each, anything you want. But not till I get back, O.K.?"

"O.K.," they agreed, and Mr. Schultz hurried out, saying something about Emil under his breath.

"A dime's worth for free!" cried Fats. "Come on, let's pick it out."

But Billy headed straight for the cash register. "We got to hurry," he said. "Mr. Schultz will be back any minute, or somebody might come busting in."

Fats' round pink face turned pale. "Hey," he said, "have you gone crazy? What you doing with that cash register?"

"Homework," replied Billy, pulling the paper out of his pocket. "Look here. You punch the keys for each number, and after you punch off the whole problem, you punch the big key marked Total, and the answer jumps up, all added up. See?"

Fats saw. "But say, it comes out in dollars and cents. What about that?"

Billy was already punching away on the first problem, marking his place on the paper with his thumb. "Doesn't matter. This thing'll add up to $99.99, so we can get any answer under ten thousand, and I don't think any of 'em will be that high. The problems are long, but the numbers aren't so big. Watch!"

He finished off the first problem and punched the key marked Total. A bell rang, the number $89.92 jumped up—and the cash drawer shot out and hit him in the stomach.

"Ouch!" he yelled. Then he copied down the answer, 8,992.

"Let me do the next," begged Fats, but Billy was already working at it, standing back a careful distance from the cash drawer.

"Nope, I got the hang of it now. You watch the door. We don't want anybody busting in."

Billy got faster and faster as he went along, copying off each answer as the register added it up. Fats watched the door. A very little girl wandered in and had quite a time deciding between a sucker and a peppermint stick. She finally made up her mind, and Billy rang up the nickel between problems.

He was going great guns now. Fats got bored watching the door, and started looking around, figuring what to take a dime's worth of, for free. He took the lid off the soft drink cooler—no raspberry pop. He poked among the wooden cases in the back, where Mr. Schultz kept the pop until he got around to putting it in the cooler.

Fats dragged up a couple of empties to stand on, so as to see what was in the top case.

Billy was ringing up the last problem when the little man came in. In spite of the heat, the little man was wearing an overcoat with the collar turned up, and his hands were in his pockets. He looked toward the rear of the store, where Fats was hidden by a large pile of boxes.

Billy punched the Total key, the bell rang, and the cash drawer popped open. He reached for his pencil to copy down the last answer.

"Leave it open, kid," said a rough voice. "This is a stick-up, see?"

It was just like in the movies. With one hand still in his pocket, the man reached across and took all the bills out of the cash drawer. It seemed to Billy that this must be happening to somebody else. He

looked around for a weapon, but there was nothing within reach except a glass jar of candy and some bags of potato chips.

"Hey," he said, "you can't do that. Mr. Schultz won't like it. Fats!" he shouted.

"Shuddup," snarled the little man, and Billy shut up.

Fats, balanced on a pile of boxes with a bottle in each hand, heard his name, and looked toward the front of the store.

The sight that met his eyes unbalanced him completely. The boxes shifted under his feet, and he let go of one bottle to grab for support. The bottle hit the cement floor and exploded. With a yell, Fats dropped the other bottle. The two explosions sounded in the narrow store like gunshots.

The little man whirled to face the rear of the store, and shouted, "Drop that gun! I've got you covered!"

This was too much for Fats. He lost his balance and fell, bringing down with him several cases of pop bottles. It sounded like machinegun fire, and the howl of pain and surprise that Fats let out when he hit the floor, sounded like nothing human.

The hold-up man turned and headed for the door. Billy threw the heavy glass jar of candy at his back. It missed and broke against the side of the door, scattering a shower of red and green and yellow candy—just as the door opened, and Mr. Schultz and Emil and Officer Maloney walked in.

The hold-up man ran head first into Officer Maloney's wide blue middle.

"Look out!" yelled Billy. "He's got a gun!"

Everything was pretty upset for a few minutes after that. Mr. Schultz was wringing his hands and shouting, "What is going on in here?" Billy was explaining that it was a stick-up. Officer Maloney had handcuffs on the little man, and was pulling the stolen money out of his pockets. And everytime anybody moved, his feet grated on broken glass and candy.

Right in the middle of it, Fats staggered up to the front of the store with his shirt all red, and red drops dripping from his hair and the tips of his fingers.

"Get a doctor!" roared Mr. Schultz. "He's shot!"

"Am I?" asked Fats, faintly, and held up one red hand. He licked a finger, "No, it's raspberry pop."

"My raspberry pop," groaned Mr. Schultz, noticing the mess in the back of the store for the first time.

Billy and Fats were pretty pleased when it turned out that it was Emil who had to stay and clean up the mess. They had to go with Mr. Schultz and Officer Maloney and the prisoner to the station house.

There they had to tell the whole story over and over, and people kept asking questions, while the sergeant at the desk wrote it all down. In the end, somehow, the sergeant seemed to get the idea that Fats had exploded the bottles on purpose to scare the hold-up man, and that Billy had kept him from escaping by hitting him with a jar of candy.

Anyway, the police, and even Mr. Schultz, seemed to think they had done well, and pretty soon they began to think so themselves.

"Hey, how does it feel to be a hero?" whispered Billy to Fats.

By the time it was all over, Billy could hardly wait to get home and start acting like a hero. Suddenly Fats had to remember the dime's worth, for free, that they never got. When Mr. Schultz and Officer Maloney went back to the store, Billy and Fats went along, too.

They looked over the shelves and counters while Mr. Schultz checked the cash drawer with Mr. Maloney. They could hear Mr. Schultz start to sputter, and then Officer Maloney called to them.

"You boys did a pretty good business in here while Mr. Schultz was gone," he said, looking at them in a strange way.

"No, sir," said Billy. "Just one nickel candy bar."

"Then maybe you can tell us why the total on the register tape shows that somebody sold $6,943.73 worth of goods today?"

Well, then it all came out. Billy showed them the homework paper, and explained how he had just taken a short cut on the arithmetic homework. "Gosh, sir," he said, "I never knew the register kept a total of all the numbers rung up on it."

Officer Maloney just looked at them for a long, long time, and while he was looking, they began to feel less and less like heroes, and more and more natural.

Finally he said, "The only way Mr. Schultz can make sure he gets the right amount back again is for him to know how much should be in the register. Now usually he can tell that by adding the amount he knows was there last night to the amount the tape says he sold today. Do you understand?"

Yes, they followed him, all right.

"So now there's just one way to get this fixed. You two boys take that homework paper, and you add together the answers to all the problems. Then you take that total and subtract it from the

total on the register tape. The answer will be the amount that ought to be on the tape."

He got them each a pencil and a piece of paper, and cleared a space on a counter for them. "Keep checking your answers with each other," he said, "until you are quite sure you have them all right. And after that," said Officer Maloney, grinning, "Mr. Schultz will be pleased to give you each a dime's worth of anything, for free."

"Yes, sir," said Billy and Fats. They licked their pencils and started to work.

"Hey, how does it feel to be a hero?" whispered Fats to Billy.

"Shut up," said Billy.

Monsieur Le Pelican

On the left-hand side of Africa, soon after the land humps into the ocean and begins wandering south, there is a wide yellow river called the Ogowe. In all the world there is no country wilder than the country this river runs through. Both sides of the river are lined with black jungles of trees, tangles of fern, and swamps of papyrus higher than a tall man's head. Palm trees lean over the river with snakes and monkey tails dangling from the branches like shadows on a line.

All the sounds of the Ogowe country are wild and fearful sounds —the trumpeting of elephants, the screams of panthers, the cries of gorillas, the stomping of buffalo. And the silences are wild and fearful, too. A crocodile, pushing his eyes up over the edge of the water, is silent. A white-bellied shark, streaking up river, is as silent as a pointed knife. Up and down the Ogowe River there is wildness like the wildness when the world first began.

Except for one spot. In the middle of this wildness there is a clearing. Giant mahogany trees have been cut down and made into buildings. Lemon trees and grapefruit trees have been lined up neatly into orchards. At daybreak a rooster crows on the top of a barnyard fence, at night a piano plays among the palm trees. Lambs and cats and dogs and chickens and ducks and wild things that have wandered in from the jungle and have been tamed, are at home in a little patch of gentleness on the long Ogowe River. For here is Dr. Schweitzer, the Great Doctor, who has built a hospital in the centre of a jungle, who has brought love to a land of fear.

He walks about the hospital grounds, and dogs and cats follow him. Pigs nudge him for attention; monkeys swoop down upon his

shoulder. A pelican guards his bedroom door; an antelope sleeps in the room next to him. The Great Doctor takes a scrap of bread from his pocket and feeds it to a pet antelope. In another pocket there may be a bite for a hungry owl. All of these animals have their names and their stores; they are the friends of the Great Doctor.

One of his best friends is Monsieur le Pelican.

In the beginning, of course, Monsieur le Pelican was not Monsieur le Pelican at all. He had no name. He didn't know the Great Doctor nor dream that he would ever live any place except where he lived right now, among the feathery papyrus stalks on the riverbank. All he knew was the warm feeling of the sun on his white feathers. And the warm feeling of his mother's wings when he and the other two baby pelicans leaned close to her in the African night. And the wonderfully warm and comfortable feeling in his stomach after his mother opened her mouth and let him feed from the pouch attached to her bill. He was too little to know much about danger except that sometimes his mother wanted him to sit very still among the papyrus leaves. She wouldn't even allow him to ruffle a wing.

But one day even his mother didn't know that danger was near. She was standing at the edge of the water looking for foolish little minnows to scoop up into her pouch. She didn't hear the hunter slipping quietly around the bend of the river in his canoe. He dipped his paddle in and out of the water so smoothly, it didn't make a sound. In and out the paddle moved, as softly as a butterfly opening and closing its wings. When the mother pelican looked up, it was too late. The hunter raised his gun and shot. As he pulled his canoe up to the river bank, he saw the three baby pelicans. They were sitting among the papyrus leaves, still as the eggs they were hatched from. Their heads were pulled so far down into their bodies that their orange beaks seemed to stick straight out from their round little white stomachs.

Again the hunter raised his gun. Perhaps he was even pointing

it at one of the white stomachs when the thought of the Great Doctor darted into his mind, swift and unexpected as a hummingbird. It was said that the Great Doctor up the river did not like baby birds and animals to be killed. He even paid money if they were brought to him alive. This was queer but it was true. A man in the hunter's own village had once been given five francs for bringing in a baby antelope. The hunter smiled. He lowered his gun and picked up the three baby pelicans, placing them so that their webbed orange feet sat squarely on the bottom of the canoe. Then he turned and headed upstream.

When the hunter reached the hospital grounds, he may have been sorry for a moment that he had come. So many eyes watched him. Women washing clothes in the river stopped their washing and looked. Children gathered on the bank and stared.

"Do you bring a sick person?" they called.

The hunter shook his head. "Only three small pelicans," he said. "I wish to give them to the Great Doctor."

"This way, this way!" The children danced in front of the hunter. They led him through the courtyard, beneath the palm trees and parrots and black and yellow weaver birds.

Perhaps they found the Great Doctor among the houses where the sick people stay. Perhaps they found him outside helping to make new buildings. Perhaps he was seeing that the vegetable and fruit gardens were being cared for properly. He would be busy because he is always busy, but for a minute he stopped his work. He pushed his white pith helmet back a bit on his head and he smiled.

"Those are three fine pelicans," the doctor said. "You were right to bring them to me." He reached into his pocket and pulled out a little sock with some coins in it and handed a few coins to the hunter.

"Akewa," the hunter said. "Thank you."

The Great Doctor built a pen for the pelicans underneath the porch of his own house. Every day he brought fish from the hospital kitchen and placed them one at a time in the beak of each pelican. One little pelican was smaller and weaker than the other two. For this one the doctor saved an extra serving of fish and spoke an extra word of encouragement.

"Come, my friend," he would say, "eat and grow strong."

When the pelicans were a little bigger, the doctor decided it was time they had a lesson in catching their own food. He brought the fish from the kitchen as usual but he no longer placed it in their beaks.

"Now you are big enough to work for your dinner," he said. He threw the fish into the air, at first close to their mouths so that it was easy for them to catch. Then he threw them farther away so the pelicans had to swing their beaks to catch the fish as they came down.

"Now, now," the doctor would laugh, "you two big ones have had enough. This is for your little brother."

The wings of the three pelicans grew wider and stronger. When they stretched them out now and flapped them at their sides, they made whirling noises in the air. Their beaks grew longer, their necks

stretched up, and every day they wanted more and more fish.

"You're too big to live under a porch," the doctor told them, "and too hungry to feed from the kitchen. Come on out. Spread your wings and find the Ogowe River, where you can fish for yourselves.

Soon the three pelicans were going to the river every day. They would hide behind trees, watching for schools of minnows to swim by. Then they would swoop down, scoop them up, toss back their heads, and let the river water drool out on both sides of their long beaks as they swallowed their catch. But always one of the pelicans was slower than the other two. He stayed smaller and when the three went home in a line, he was always the last one. In the evening when the Great Doctor would meet the pelicans walking in the courtyard, he would stop and speak to the smallest one.

"And are you finding enough minnows in our river, my friend?" he might ask. He would reach into his pocket and perhaps he would find a special little tidbit for this smallest pelican.

One day went and the next day came on the long Ogowe River. Every day was very much the same for the three pelicans. Every morning the sun came up, setting the earth to steaming and the weaver birds to screeching in their basket-like nests. Then it was time to go to the river. Every morning at six o'clock the sun went down and the crickets and toads tuned up to sing. Then it was time to go home. But one day something very different happened. The three pelicans were at the water watching for minnows when all at once there was a great flapping in the air. A long, dark shadow fell across the river. The sky was filled with white wings and the air was filled with excitement. The season had come for the Big Flight when all the pelicans from inland waters flew toward the sea.

The three pelicans on the riverbank saw the white wings and they felt the excitement. They stretched their own wings wider than they had ever stretched them before and they rose up into the sky, one behind the other, the smallest one last. Round and round the

hospital grounds they circled and at last joined the long line of white wings disappearing over the rim of the earth. At the very end of the line the smallest pelican flapped his wings a few times and sailed, flapped his wings and sailed, just as the other pelicans did. But he didn't go far. Behind him and below him were the hospital grounds and the Great Doctor and the river and the courtyard all speckled with sunshine and noisy weaver birds. The smallest pelican turned around, circled once more, and then dropped to the edge of the river. That night at six o'clock when the sun went down, the smallest pelican went back to the courtyard just as he had every evening, only this time he was alone.

When the Great Doctor saw him, his eyes crinkled with pleasure and his moustache turned up at the corners with his smile. "Ah, my little friend," he said, "so you didn't go with your brothers. You decided to stay with me, did you?"

After the Big Flight, days went back to being the same for the smallest pelican except that he was no longer, of course, the smallest pelican. He was the only pelican and he was growing bigger and bulkier and bossier all the time. He made his home now on the porch roof of the Great Doctor's house and he appointed himself night watchman for the Great Doctor. Today he is still night watchman. From six o'clock in the evening when he flies up from the river, to six o'clock in the morning, he guards the front door of the Great Doctor's house as carefully as if he were a policeman with a billy club. No one but the Great Doctor and one or two especially trusted members of the hospital dares to go through that door unless he wants to be rapped on the head with a hard pelican beak. It is difficult to remember that this was once the smallest pelican. Now he is an enormous bird and a very dignified gentleman. He is Monsieur le Pelican.

"Bon soir, Monsieur le Pelican," the Great Doctor says every evening as he comes home and greets his friend.

Monsieur le Pelican says nothing but it is clear what he would

like to say. "You see? I am on duty as usual. You can count on me until six o'clock tomorrow morning."

Now, when it is the time of year for the Big Flight, Monsieur le Pelican doesn't even stretch his wings. No! This is his home, his river, even his fish. Surely that is what he must have been thinking the day he saw the fisherwoman pull up a fish from his river and drop it into the bottom of her canoe. She was sitting in her canoe not far from the shore, within the jagged shadows of the palm trees, in the very part of the river where his own minnows swam. Monsieur

le Pelican felt just as he did when a stranger knocked on the doctor's door in the evening. He felt as if his feathers had been ruffled deep inside him where, of course, there were no feathers to ruffle. Whenever he felt like this, he had to do something about it. So Monsieur le Pelican spread his wings and down he swooped headfirst into the fisherwoman's boat. Straight as an arrow from the sun he dropped, and he had the fish in his mouth when WHAM! The fisherwoman picked up the paddle of her canoe and hit Monsieur le Pelican hard across a leg.

Later that day when the Great Doctor was working on the broken leg, he reminded Monsieur le Pelican that there were enough

fish in the Ogowe River for many fishermen. "And now until your leg is mended," the Great Doctor went on, "I am afraid, Monsieur, that I must carry you back and forth to the river."

And he did. Every morning the great Doctor picked up the big, white, feathery armful that was Monsieur le Pelican and together they walked under the palm trees to the yellow river. The sun, then, would be pushing itself, hot and round, up one side of the African world. In the evening when the sun was dropping behind the other side of the African world, the Great Doctor would carry his friend home again. And all this time, between sunset and sunrise and between sunrise and sunset, Monsieur le Pelican's leg was growing stronger.

Now, of course, his leg is well again and Monsieur le Pelican goes down alone to the river. When visitors and new patients arrive, he is the first one to greet them under the mango tree where canoes dock. He lumbers up from behind a tree or rock and looks over each newcomer carefully. Day and night he must be on guard, he seems to say. Not only at the riverbank and at the doctor's door; the whole hospital comes under his wing. Sometimes he follows the African sheep to pasture and, mounting an old stump, he stands guard while they graze. There is one big, horny ram who is his particular friend. He always stands close and pays special attention when Monsieur le Pelican starts lecturing from his stump. Surely this is what he is doing. He nods his head, flaps and points his wings, and becomes very excited. Perhaps he is warning the sheep against the dangers of the world outside. Perhaps, some people say, he is repeating one of the Great Doctor's own sermons.

"He is like Saint Francis," the Great Doctor says, "preaching to the animals." And he smiles, for the Great Doctor and Monsieur le Pelican are such good friends. Whenever the Great Doctor goes to Europe on a visit, he carries with him a picture of Monsieur le Pelican. No matter where he is, he puts the picture on his desk, and when he looks at it, he is glad.

Brother's Keeper

"Peter, I wish you'd take your cousin Allan out to the Bird Sanctuary tomorrow," Peter's father suggested quietly.

"But the Bird Sanctuary!" Peter protested. "I can't take my B.B. gun into the Bird Sanctuary!"

"It wouldn't do you any harm to be separated from that B.B. gun for a couple of hours!" Peter's father said.

"But Dad, I like shooting at things! Bang! And they always drop!"

His father was quiet for awhile. Then, "Allan wants to go to the Bird Sanctuary before he goes back to the city," he said. "He has an idea that he could write a poem about it. It would not be full of sights like an ordinary poem . . . but one for blind people like himself . . . with sounds and smells . . . how things feel when you touch them, and things like that."

Peter found himself remembering the first day Allan came to the farm. It was the first holiday for Allan since the firecracker had exploded in front of his eyes. When Peter had taken him to meet the calf, the blind boy's fingers had smoothed the softness of the young fur. The calf seemed to enjoy this gentle exploration. Allan smiled softly as the calf sucked his fingers. Peter showed Allan the kittens then.

"We can't have animals where we live," Allan said rubbing his face against the small grey kitten. "He's like a little cloud, isn't he?"

Peter wanted to laugh. Who ever heard of a kitten being like a cloud? It was then Allan first talked about writing a poem for blind people.

"Poetry!" Peter choked. "I get plenty of that in school!"

"So I expect you to take Allan to the Bird Sanctuary tomorrow," his father said breaking in on his thoughts. Peter knew it was an order.

"But why does it have to be me all the time? Why can't someone else take a turn being his eyes?" Peter wanted to know.

"Just seems to be you he looks to. And maybe that's the best sign there is that you're the one who has been chosen."

"Chosen what?"

"Call it what you want. Brother's Keeper is what Cain called it."

"All right. I'll take him," Peter said.

He told Allan about the plans for next day. "We'll bring a good big lunch," he said. "It's a long walk out to the Sanctuary."

But no sooner had he said it than a couple of boys came up on their bikes. "We're starting ball practice tomorrow," they said. "Down behind the store. Are you trying out for pitcher again this year?"

So there it was. The one ball practice in all the year that Peter could not afford to miss, and he had promised to help a fellow go hunting for stuff to put in a poem! Peter decided that he wouldn't exactly break his promise; he'd just take Allan out to Duckle's instead. That was on the road to the Sanctuary but only a quarter of the way. There was a wood out there where a fellow could take a B.B. gun and pick off bullfrogs or blackbirds or squirrels. They could get back in time for the ball practice.

"You tell the boys I'll be there," he told his brother. "I might be late, but I'll show up."

So the next day Peter took Allan out to Duckle's place. A squirrel came out to take a look at them as soon as they got there.

Quickly Peter pushed Allan behind a maple tree, gave his B.B. gun four pumps and drew a bead on the squirrel.

"Would you like to try it?" he asked Allan. When Allan had

said that he would, Peter took him by the shoulder and put his hand around the trigger guard.

Allan's finger felt around till he found the trigger, while Peter aimed the gun.

"I've got him covered," he said at last. "You can pull anytime." Then he waited impatiently. The squirrel moved along the limb and came out to the end of it. He sat up, spat on his paws and dried them on his tail. Peter drew a bead again, but Allan did not shoot.

Peter said, "Well, Allan, do you shoot him or do I?"

"But—but what does he look like, Peter?"

"If you pull the trigger he'll fall right into your hands and you can feel for yourself what he's like."

For a minute or two Allan looked as if he was trying very hard to get up enough nerve to pull the trigger, but he did not, and Peter fought hard to keep from getting annoyed.

"What do his eyes look like, Peter?"

For a moment Peter took his cheek from the gun. He felt soupy inside. He said, "Oh, his eyes are round. They're kind of—well, they don't miss a thing."

Peter kept on looking at the squirrel, watching how his sides spangled in the sun, how he kept munching away like a little old man, and how alive he was.

Then he noticed that Allan did not have his finger on the trigger any more.

"Don't you want to shoot him?" Peter asked.

Allan gulped. "It seems so—sort of awful—to think that just one little press of one finger can change things so quickly, doesn't it, Peter?"

Peter unloaded the gun.

"It's all right," he said. "If a guy doesn't like to shoot a squirrel, it's all right."

Down the road, from the direction of the store, came a sudden burst of excited voices. The ball players had begun to arrive. Peter started and turned as if to catch a glimpse of the scene.

Allan stretched out under the tree on his back and the squirrel settled himself on a branch and started scolding them. "What colour is he, Peter?" Allan asked.

Peter was still looking in the direction of the store. "He's a red squirrel," he said crossly. Then he remembered something he had been going to ask Allan for quite a while now. "Say, Allan, how can you know what a colour is like anyhow? You wouldn't remember colours! How do you know red or brown or anything else?"

Allan put his hands under his head. "I guess a fellow gets so he can feel colours, maybe," he said. "You take green. That's the way the grass feels and smells when you walk on it."

Another shout came up from the diamond. Peter rolled over onto his elbows and closed his eyes as if his pain were too great.

Allan sat up. "I don't think you're listening," he said.

"I am too," Peter declared sharply. "Go on. Tell me what yellow is."

"You'd sooner be down at that ball game," Allan said.

"If I wanted to be there, I'd be there. Now what's yellow?"

Allan lay back again. "Yellow? Yellow is the way you feel

when you lay your head on a bunch of dandelions in the morning with the sun burning your face and bees buzzing around. . . ."

"What's some other colours? What's a no-good colour like grey, for instance?"

"Grey? Well, grey is like the wind in your nose on a foggy day with your clothes all sticky and birds not singing."

One of the shouts from down at the store came up the road clearly, "Batter up!"

"Tell me about red, Allan," Peter said.

"Red is soft," he replied. "And it's smooth like satin. Or a flower maybe. It smells like a flower. Red is how you feel when your mother kisses you good night beside the fireplace. That's the way red is to me."

They got up and walked down the woodland path to the brightness of the open road again. To the left, and three miles away was the sanctuary. To the right, was the ball game. Peter did not hesitate for a moment.

"Come on. We'd better get out to that Bird Sanctuary," he said eagerly, taking Allan's arm and turning left with him.

"But I don't want you to miss your ball game," Allan protested.

"Look here, my fine little poet," Peter said in a voice that was musical with good feeling again. "I told you that if I wanted to be at that ball game, two teams of horses couldn't stop me."

"But—but I don't want you to feel that you've got some sort of duty toward me either, Peter."

Peter took him by the elbow and pushed him merrily along the road. "Never did a duty in my life," he said. "It's this poem you're going to write," he said. "I want to see that."

Anyak and the Bulldozer

Anyak squatted down beside the huge machine and waited patiently for the driver to come. Every day for three weeks he had appeared at the new station in Canada's Dew Line to watch the driver start up his huge bulldozer. At first, he had been very much afraid of the big machine. When it was first started up the noise had driven him away in terror with his hands pressed tightly against his ears. No-one of his people had ever heard such a noise before. After a few days of watching at a great distance, Anyak was sure that the man who drove the great machine would not let it run away or do terrible things. Every day, Anyak would come a little closer to watch the work. He loved to see the driver lower the great blade at the front and see it scrape away at the frozen tundra. He could hardly believe the size of the rocks it moved to one side so easily. Best of all he liked to watch the driver start the motor.

First, the heavy canvas cover was rolled back and laid on the ground. Then the huge tin of oil which had been warming near the stove in the bunk house was poured into the engine. Next, the driver lit a blow-torch and moved the bright flame quickly over most of the engine until the bitter cold had gone from the metal and his bare hand could be laid on it without discomfort.

The great moment was now upon them and the driver, giving a broad wink to Anyak, stepped up to the seat, pulled out the choke and pushed the starter. Instantly the engine roared into life. The driver slowly pushed in the choke and the huge machine settled into a steady purr of controlled power.

The driver grinned down at Anyak, waved his hand in its heavy fur mitt and sent the great machine grumbling on its way to work.

Anyak, standing now, waved back and watched until it disappeared over the hill to the site of the station. Slowly he walked toward the hut of his family. It stood, with many others, close to the shore of the Strait. He looked at it proudly. Since the men had come to build the station he and his father had been able to gather many of the pieces of left-over wood and use them on the house. They had learned to cut open the empty oil cans and hammer them flat. These tins made good shingles for the roof and covering for the sides. It was not as attractive as the snow house they used to live in but it was the "modern" way and Anyak wanted to be modern.

Anyak opened the board door and went in. His mother turned from cooking at the stove and smiled at him. His grandfather looked up from his stool in the corner and twinkled at him. His little sister clutched him around his waist and hugged him tight. Anyak gazed over her head toward his father who looked at him seriously and said.

"Where has the son been?"

"The son has been watching the men start the big machines. They have said that someday the son may start them." Excitement at the idea made his voice quiver.

"The son would be better not to waste time with foolish things. He should come with his father and learn the ways of his people. This morning, we will go to the trap lines."

"But father, I do not want to hunt and fish, I want to learn how to drive the big machines," Anyak blurted. Then he stopped, ashamed, for a son does not talk back to his father.

The family stared at him, shocked. Even his little sister said, "Oh, Anyak!"

But his father merely repeated, "We will go to the trap-line," and turned back to his breakfast.

All that morning Anyak followed his father around the line of traps, watching while skilful fingers released the dead animals from the traps and carefully cleaned and re-set the steel jaws.

In silence, they returned to the house and squatted in the snow to skin the animals and stretch the pelts on the wooden frames. Even while Anyak's fingers moved swiftly at this job his mind wandered toward the big machines. He wished with all his heart that his fingers were working on them.

That evening at supper his father talked for hours about how the Eskimo used to live,while his Grandfather nodded in his corner.

"It was so," Grandfather would say from time to time.

The stories of hunters using kayaks, of long journeys by dog-team and of the beauty and comfort of a snow house used to thrill him. But it was not that way to-night. To-night his mind could only think of the great machines. When his father had finished, Anyak said,

"The man of the machine says that I could go to a school to learn about machines."

Instantly, his mother said, "But you would have to go away!"

"You would not leave us, Anyak?" his sister pleaded.

Anyak sat silent under their questioning looks.

"I would go to learn about the machines," he replied.

Angrily, his father rose and stood towering over his son.

"You will be no son of mine if you leave our home and our ways," he said, and left the house.

His mother and his sister said nothing more but the tears streamed down their cheeks. Even Grandfather, whom he always considered a friend, shook his head sadly.

Anyak had never felt lonelier in his life. It seemed so unfair. Just because he wanted to go away to learn about machines instead of staying home to trap and fish, his father didn't want him for a son and the rest of the family would not speak to him.

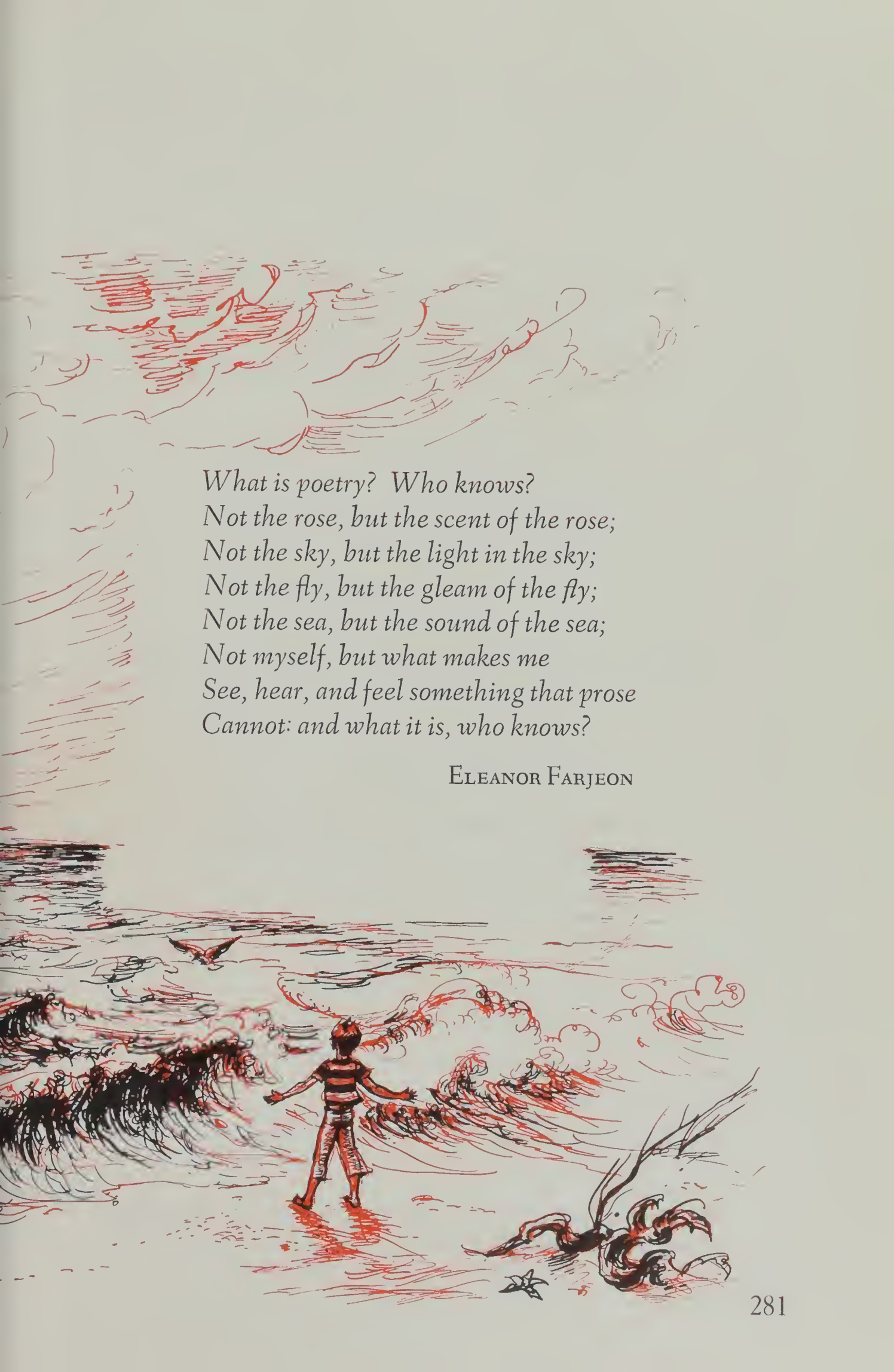
The family had been in bed a long time before Father returned. Anyak knew by the sound of their breathing that only his sister slept. The sound of his father's angry mutterings and his mother's crying pushed sleep even farther away. Even when the hut became quiet, Anyak lay awake staring at the roof. He felt badly that he had angered and hurt his family, but he was determined to go away and learn about the machines.

For many days the family behaved as strangers. Gone was the laughter and fun that had made their days and nights together pleasant. Then one day as they sat in silence at their evening meal, Grandfather cleared his throat. Startled, they all looked at the old

man, for he seldom spoke, and when he did his words were listened to.

"I have been thinking," he said, "that what my son says is true. We are Eskimo and we must be true to our people. Their ways are good ways and are proper to the north country. We must never forget them. But what my grandson says is true also. It is good to go to school and to learn about the big machines for that is part of to-day's world. My son, you say one thing. Anyak, you say another thing and between you the peace of this house is broken. Listen to me. I tell you that both things are good. Anyak, you must do both things. Learn first the ways of your people and then the ways of the machines. Then you can still be a true Eskimo in a modern world."

In silence, the family sat thinking about the words of the old man. Then Anyak's father leaned across the table to rest his hand on his son's shoulder.

"It is good," he said.

As the family chatter which he had missed for so long spread around Anyak, warming his heart as it used to do, he thought with pleasure of learning the old things again. He thought, too, of learning the new things at school and his heart beat faster.

"It *is* good!" he said aloud and the whole family echoed his happy laughter.

POETRY

What is poetry? Who knows?
Not the rose, but the scent of the rose;
Not the sky, but the light in the sky;
Not the fly, but the gleam of the fly;
Not the sea, but the sound of the sea;
Not myself, but what makes me
See, hear, and feel something that prose
Cannot: and what it is, who knows?

ELEANOR FARJEON

Yesterday

Where have you gone to, Yesterday,
And why did you have to go?
I've been wondering all the day,
And nobody seems to know.

Say, is it true that you've journeyed far,
Over the hills to Spain,
And no one to see which road you took
Nor call you back again?

HUGH CHESTERMAN

Can you answer the question asked in lines 1 and 2? "Yesterday" is spoken to as if it were a person. We call this *personification*.

Our Clock

Our clock is a little house on the wall,
And a cuckoo bird lives in it.
He tells the time at every hour,
Exactly on the minute.

When it is one, he says Cuckoo!
And Cuckoo! Cuckoo! when it's two.
And when it's three, he'll call for you,
Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

FLORENCE EAKMAN

"Our Clock." This is a simple description whereas "Yesterday" might be called a flight of fancy.

Will There Really Be A Morning?

Will there really be a morning?
Is there such a thing as day?
Could I see it from the mountains
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water-lilies?
Has it feathers like a bird?
Is it brought from famous countries
Of which I have never heard?

Oh, some scholar! Oh, some sailor!
Oh, some wise man from the skies!
Please to tell a little pilgrim
Where the place called morning lies!

EMILY DICKINSON

Which of the two previous poems does this resemble? How? How many questions can you hear when you listen to the poem? When you read this aloud, emphasize the important words. The "beat" or rhythm will take care of itself. At the end of a question your voice usually goes up, like this ↗ . In which of these lines does your voice *not* go up?

Tiptoe Night

Tiptoe Night comes down the lane,
All alone, without a word,
Taking for his own again
Every little flower and bird.

Not a footfall, not a sigh,
Not a ripple of the air,
Not a sound to reckon by,
Yet I know that he is there.

And I count them as I wait,
Step by tiptoe step, until—
Hush! he's at the garden-gate
Hush! he's at the window-sill.

JOHN DRINKWATER

Notice the personification in this poem. Why does John Drinkwater call his poem "Tiptoe Night"? How does John Drinkwater know that Tiptoe Night is "there"?

Morning Is A Lovely Thing

I know a boy who went to meet the morning,
Across the dewy meadows toward the sun.
He said he'd like to see the day a-borning,
And find out how the hours are begun.

The sky was piled with clouds all pink and glowing
Above the hill where trees were lined with gold,
And all about, bright buttercups were growing—
The children of the sun, so he'd been told.

He crossed a wall where soft green ferns were growing
In feathered clumps beneath a maple tree,
And in the grass red strawberries were showing.
Oh, morning was a lovely thing to see!

The scent of new-mown hay was in the air,
And briar roses that he loved so well.
The perfume of the earth was everywhere.
Oh, morning was a lovely thing to smell!

He heard the pleasant whir of birds a-winging,
The lark and white-throat songs were high and clear.
The air was full of robins' cheery singing.
Oh, morning was a lovely thing to hear!

The sun burst forth from out the trees' bright lining—
A whirling, blazing, blinding golden wheel;
It bathed and warmed and filled him with its shining.
Oh, morning was a lovely thing to feel!

Dorothy Hamilton Gallagher

Where did the boy find morning?
Look up the word *metaphor* in your dictionary.
In the second verse (or stanza) there are two metaphors. Can you find another in the poem?
Which of the five senses are *not* mentioned in this poem?

The Moon

See how the Sky
Is sailing its Kite,
Trailing a Hundred Stars
Over the night.

LOUISE A. GARNETT

Tracks In The Snow

This was a mouse who played around
All by himself one night,
Dancing under the winter moon
Forward and left and right.

This was a pheasant walking by,
Out with a friend or two—
This was a rabbit running fast,
The way rabbits do.

This was a squirrel who found a nut—
This was a chickadee—
And this uncommon sort of track
I think was probably me.

MARCHETTE CHUTE

Why Does It Snow?

"Why does it snow? Why does it snow?"
The children come crowding around me to know.
I said to my nephew, I said to my niece,
"It's just the old woman a-plucking her geese."
With her riddle cum dinky dido,
With her riddle cum dinky dee.

The old woman sits on a pillowy cloud,
She calls to her geese, and they come in a crowd;
A cackle, a wackle, a hiss and a cluck,
And then the old woman begins for to pluck.
With her riddle cum dinky dido,
With her riddle cum dinky dee.

The feathers go fluttering up in the air,
Until the poor geese are entirely bare;
A toddle, a waddle, a hiss and a cluck,
"You may grow some more if you have the good luck!"
With your riddle cum dinky dido,
With your riddle cum dinky dee.

The feathers go swirling around and around,
Then whirlicking, twirlicking, sink to the ground;
The farther they travel, the colder they grow,
And when they get down here, they've turned into snow.
With their riddle cum dinky dido,
With their riddle cum dinky dee.

Laura E. Richards

Very Lovely

Wouldn't it be lovely if the rain came down
Till the water was quite high over all the town?
If the cabs and buses all were set afloat,
And we had to go to school in a little boat?

Wouldn't it be lovely if it still should pour
And we all went up to live on the second floor?
If we saw the butcher sailing up the hill,
And we took the letters in at the window sill?

It's been raining, raining, all the afternoon;
All these things might happen really very soon.
If we woke tomorrow and found they had begun,
Wouldn't it be glorious? Wouldn't it be fun?

Rose Fyleman

It is fun to imagine what would happen if . . . and to forget the unpleasant side of the picture.

It Is Raining

It is raining.

Where would you like to be in the rain?
Where would you like to be?

I'd like to be in a tall tree top,
where the rain comes dripping, drop, drop, drop,
around on every side:
where it wets the farmer, the barn, the pig,
the cows, the chickens both little and big;
where it batters and beats on a field of wheat
and makes the little birds hide.

It is raining.

Where would you like to be in the rain?
Where would you like to be?

I'd like to be on a ship at sea,
where everything's wet as wet can be
and the waves are rolling high:
where sailors are pulling the ropes and singing,
and wind's in the rigging and salt spray's stinging,
and round us sea gulls cry.
On a dipping skimming ship at sea—
that's where I'd like to be in the rain;
that's where I'd like to be!

LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL

Snow In The City

Snow is out of fashion,
But it still comes down,
To whiten all the buildings
In our town;
To dull the noise of traffic;
To dim each glaring light
With star-shaped feathers
Of frosty white.
And not the tallest building
Halfway up the sky;
Or all the trains and buses,
And taxis scudding by;
And not a million people,
Not one of them at all,
Can do a thing about the snow
But let it fall!

RACHEL FIELD

Sometimes a poet describes a scene, and then goes on to say something else about it. How does Rachel Field do this in "Snow in the City"? Find the answer to this question as you listen to the poem.

Falling Snow

See the pretty snowflakes
  Falling from the sky;
On the walk and housetop
  Soft and thick they lie.

On the window-ledges,
  On the branches bare;
Now how fast they gather,
  Filling all the air.

Look into the garden,
  Where the grass was green;
Covered by the snowflakes,
  Not a blade is seen.

Now the bare black bushes
  All look soft and white,
Every twig is laden—
  What a pretty sight!

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Compare this poem with the previous one. What is the main difference between them? How are they similar?

Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer,
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

ROBERT FROST

Why do you think the poet stopped his horse?
Notice the repeated last line. Do you like it? If so, why?
What sounds can you hear in the poem?

The Wind

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song.

Robert Louis Stevenson

This poem has a sort of "chorus" at the end of each stanza. This suggests the song of the wind and its continuous blowing.

The Wind

Why does the wind so want to be
Here in my little room with me?
He's all the world to blow about,
But just because I keep him out
He cannot be a moment still,
But frets upon my window sill,
And sometimes brings a noisy rain
To help him batter at the pane.

Upon my door he comes to knock.
He rattles, rattles at the lock
And lifts the latch and stirs the key—
Then waits a moment breathlessly,
And soon, more fiercely than before,
He shakes my little trembling door,
And though "Come in, come in!" I say,
He neither comes nor goes away.

Barefoot across the chilly floor
I run and open wide the door;
He rushes in and back again
He goes to batter door and pane,
Pleased to have blown my candle out.
He's all the world to blow about,
Why does he want so much to be
Here in my little room with me?

ELIZABETH RENDALL

Look up "wind" in the dictionary and compare the bare meaning of the word with the "pictures" the poets make in these two poems.

Wind

Wind is to show
How a thing can blow,
And especially through trees.
When it is fast
It is called a blast,
And it's otherwise known as a breeze.

It begins somewhere in the sky,
Like a sigh,
Then it turns to a roar,
And returns to a sigh once more.
Wind is the air
In your hair,
When you stand
On the sand
By the shore.

Wind will shake the lattices late at night;
It will make the clouds go by.
Anything easy that's hard to do,
It is pretty sure to try:

Blow down a pine,
Clothes from a line,
Tumble a chimney top.
Wind is the general sound
You hear around,
That suddenly likes to stop.

LEONARD FEENEY

Is personification used? How? Compare the sounds of the wind in these two poems.

Something Told The Wild Geese

Something told the wild geese
  It was time to go.
Though the fields lay golden
  Something whispered—"Snow",
Leaves were green and stirring,
  Berries, luster-glossed,
But beneath warm feathers
  Something cautioned—"Frost"
All the sagging orchards
  Stemmed with amber spice,
But each wild beast stiffened
  At remembered ice.
Something told the wild geese
  It was time to fly—
Summer sun was on their wings.
  Winter in their cry.

RACHEL FIELD

Night

Stars over snow,
And in the west a planet
Swinging below a star—
Look for a lovely thing and you will find it,
It is not far—
It never will be far.

SARA TEASDALE

Miss T.

It's a very odd thing—
 As odd as can be—
That whatever Miss T. eats
 Turns into Miss T.;
Porridge and apples,
 Mince, muffins and mutton,
Jam, junket, jumbles—
 Not a rap, not a button
It matters; the moment
 They're out of her plate,
Though shared by Miss Butcher
 And sour Mr. Bate;
Tiny and cheerful
 And neat as can be.
Whatever Miss T. eats
 Turns into Miss T.

WALTER DE LA MARE

Poetry is about everything. Walter de la Mare writes in an amusing way about something very wonderful. What is it?

C Is For Charms

1 I met a Strange Woman
With things in her arms.
'What have you got, Woman?'
'Charms,' she said, 'charms.'

2 'I will put one on you
Ere I have done.
Which shall I put on you?'
'None,' I said, 'none!'

3 Oh how she smiled at me,
'Nay, then, my dear,
Look, do but look at them.
What do you fear?'

4 'I've a black charm for night
And a gold one for noon,
A white charm for winter,
A rose charm for June.'

5 'I've a green charm for woods,
And a blue charm for water
And a silver one for moons
When they're in their first quarter.

6 'I've a slow charm for growth,
And a swift one for birds,
And a soft one for sleep,
And a sweet one for words.

7 'I've a long charm for love,
And a strong charm for youth,
And one you can't change
Or destroy for the truth.

8 'Sorry's the man, my dear,
'Sorry,' she said,
'Who wanders through life
With no charm on his head.'

9 Oh how she smiled at me,
'Big one or small,
Which shall I put on you?'
'All,' I said, 'All.'

Eleanor Farjeon

How much does the poet tell you of the exact appearance of the charms? Do you think that she leaves you guessing purposely? Why?

The Wind And The Moon

Said the Wind to the Moon, "I will blow you out;
    You stare
    In the air
    Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about—
I hate to be watched; I'll blow you out."

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon.
    So, deep
    On a heap
    Of clouds to sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
    On high
    In the sky,
    With her one ghost eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain.
Said the Wind, "I will blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim.
    "With my sledge,
    And my wedge,
    I have knocked off her edge!
If only I blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and he blew, and she thinned to a thread.
    "One puff
    More's enough
    To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glimmer, glum will go the thread."

He blew a great blast, and the thread was gone.
    In the air
    Nowhere
    Was a moonbeam bare;
Far off and harmless the shy stars shone—
Sure and certain the Moon was gone!

The Wind he took to his revels once more;
    On down,
    In town,
    Like a merry-mad clown,
He leaped and halloed with whistle and roar—
"What's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage—he danced and blew;
    But in vain
    Was the pain
    Of his bursting brain;
For still the broader the Moon-scrap grew,
The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew—till she filled the night,
And shone
On her throne
In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the queen of the night.

Said the Wind: "What a marvel of power am I!
With my breath,
Good faith!
I blew her to death—
First blew her away right out of the sky—
Then blew her in; what strength have I!"

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair;
For high
In the sky,
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

G. MacDonald

The Wind and the Moon are personified in this poem. Think of some words to describe the sort of persons they become.

Questions At Night

Why
Is the sky?

What starts the thunder overhead?
Who makes the crashing noise?
Are the angels falling out of bed?
Are they breaking all their toys?

Why does the sun go down so soon?
Why do the night-clouds crawl
Hungrily up to the new-laid moon
And swallow it, shell and all?

If there's a Bear among the stars,
As all the people say,
Won't he jump over those pasture-bars
And drink up the Milky Way?

Does every star that happens to fall
Turn into a firefly?
Can't it ever get back to Heaven at all?
And why
Is the sky?

LOUIS UNTERMEYER

What metaphor is used here for the moon? How many questions can you hear as you listen to the poem? Which of these questions can you answer? What is the Bear among the stars?

The Falling Star

I saw a star glide down the sky,
Blinding the north as it went by.
Too burning and too quick to hold.
Too lovely to be bought or sold.
Good only to make wishes on.
And then forever to be gone.

Sara Teasdale

October

The summer is over,
The trees are all bare,
There is mist in the garden
And frost in the air.
The meadows are empty
And gathered the sheaves—
But isn't it lovely
Kicking up leaves!

John from the garden
Has taken the chairs;
It's dark in the evening
And cold on the stairs.
Winter is coming
And everyone grieves—
But isn't it lovely
Kicking up leaves!

Rose Fyleman

Hallowe'en

Tonight is the night
When dead leaves fly
Like witches on switches
Across the sky,
When elf and sprite
Flit through the night
On a moony sheen.

Tonight is the night
When leaves make a sound
Like a gnome in his home
Under the ground,
When spooks and trolls
Creep out of holes
Mossy and green.

Tonight is the night
When pumpkins stare
Through sheaves and leaves
Everywhere,
When ghoul and ghost
And goblin host
Dance round their queen.
It's Hallowe'en!

HARRY BEHN

Notice the short, jerky lines and "spiky" words in this poem. Why do you think the poet used them?

Hallowe'en

"Granny, I saw a witch go by,
I saw two, I saw three!
I heard their skirts go swish, swish, swish—"
    "Child, 'twas leaves against the sky,
    And the autumn wind in the tree."

"Granny, broomsticks they bestrode,
Their hats were black as tar,
And buckles twinkled on their shoes—"
    "You saw but shadows on the road,
    The sparkle of a star."

"Granny, all their heels were red,
Their cats were big as sheep.
I heard a bat say to an owl—"
    "Child, you must go straight to bed,
    'Tis time you were asleep."

"Granny, I saw men in green,
Their eyes shone fiery red,
Their heads were yellow pumpkins—"
    "Now you've told me what you've seen,
    WILL you go to bed?"

"Granny?"
    "Well?"
"Don't you believe—?"
    "What?"
"What I've seen?
Don't you know it's Hallowe'en?"

Marie A. Lawson

In this cleverly written conversation we get a vivid picture of Hallowe'en. Is the child in the poem satisfied with Granny's answers? How do you know?

Witch Cat

I want a little witch cat
With eyes all yellow-green,
Who rides upon a broomstick
Every Hallowe'en,
Who purrs when she is taking off,
Just like a purring plane,
And doesn't mind a tailspin
Even in the rain.
I want a cat who dares to light
The candle of the moon ,
And set its jack-o-lantern face
A-laughing like a loon.
I want a cat who laps the milk
Along the Milky Way,
A cat of spunk and character
As daring as the day;
But gentle-looking kittens
Are in the stores to sell ,
And which cat is a witch cat,
I really cannot tell.

ROWENA BENNETT

"All cats seem to have a little of the 'witch-cat' in them." Do you agree or not? Why?

December

I like days
with a snow-white collar,
and nights when the moon
is a silver dollar,
and hills are filled
with eiderdown stuffing,
and your breath makes smoke
like an engine puffing.

I like days
when feathers are snowing,
and all the eaves
have petticoats showing,
and the air is cold,
and the wires are humming,
but you feel all warm . . .
with Christmas coming!

AILEEN FISHER

Look up *simile* in your dictionary.
". . . your breath makes smoke
like an engine puffing."
This is a simile because it says "like".
What kind of days do you like? Why?

Christmas Eve

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

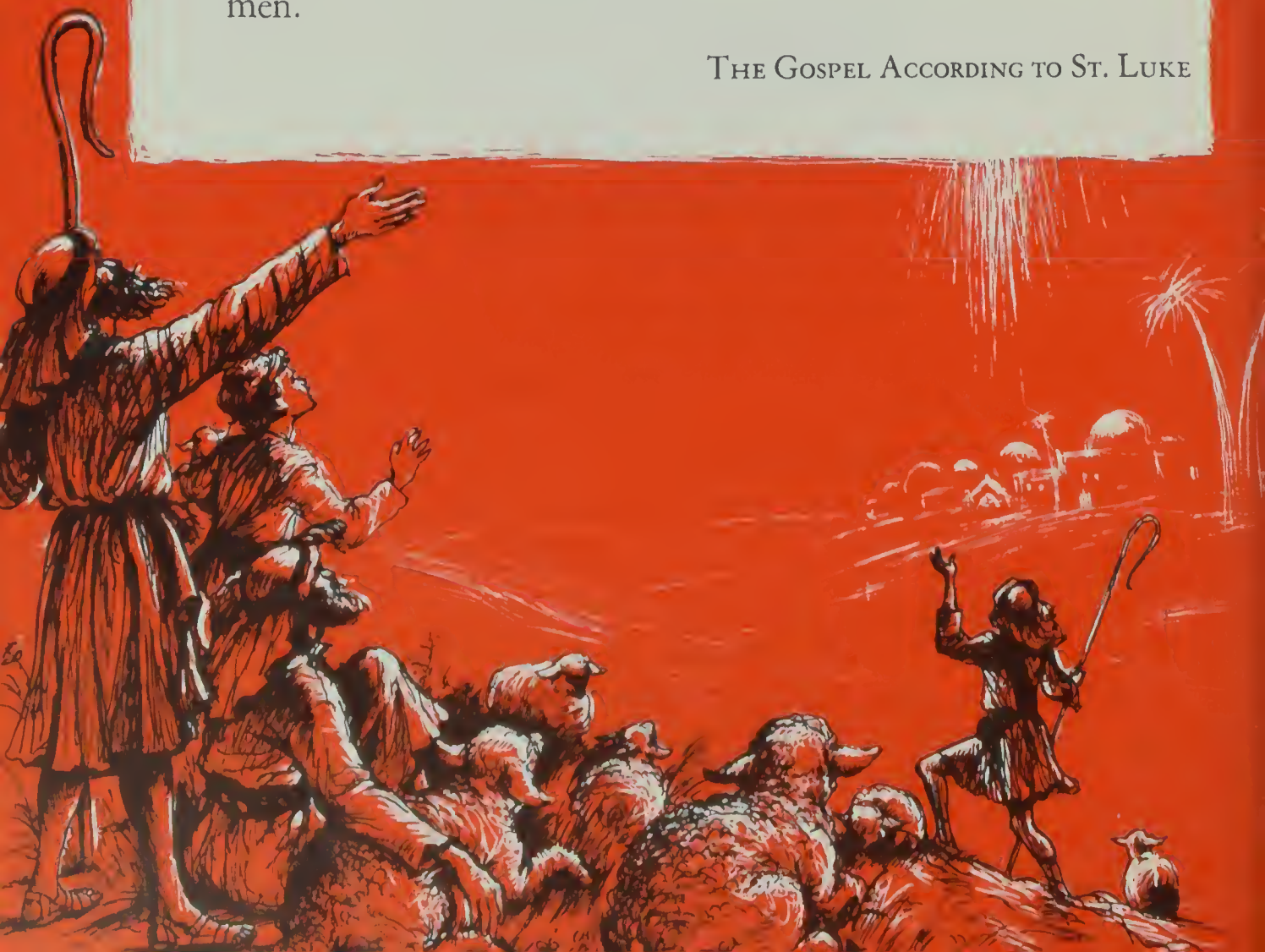
And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

Christmas Chant

Candle, candle,
Burning bright
On our window
Sill tonight,
Like the shining
Christmas star
Guiding shepherds
From afar,
Lead some weary
Traveler here,
That he may share
Our Christmas cheer.

ISABEL SHAW

This is beautiful because it is simple.

Christmas Morning

If Bethlehem were here today,
Or this were very long ago,
There wouldn't be a winter time
Nor any cold or snow.

I'd run out through the garden gate,
And down along the pasture walk;
And off beside the cattle barns
I'd hear a kind of gentle talk.

I'd move the heavy iron chain
And pull away the wooden pin;
I'd push the door a little bit
And tiptoe very softly in.

The pigeons and the yellow hens
And all the cows would stand away;
Their eyes would open wide to see
A lady in the manger hay,

If this were very long ago
And Bethlehem were here today.

And Mother held my hand and smiled—
I mean the lady would—and she
Would take the woolly blankets off
Her little boy so I could see.

His shut-up eyes would be asleep,
And he would look like our John,
And he would be all crumpled too,
And have a pinkish colour on.

I'd watch his breath go in and out.
His little clothes would all be white.
I'd slip my finger in his hand
To feel how he could hold it tight.

And she would smile and say, "Take care,"
The mother, Mary, would, "Take care";
And I would kiss his little hand
And touch his hair.

While Mary put the blankets back
The gentle talk would soon begin.
And when I'd tiptoe softly out
I'd meet the wise men going in.

ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

This poem should be read, (quietly of course) as if you are telling a story, not reciting a poem. Be guided by the punctuation: if there is none at the end of a line, don't pause. You need practice to read it well.

Presents

I wanted a rifle for Christmas,
I wanted a bat and a ball,
I wanted some skates and a bicycle,
But I didn't want mittens at all.

I wanted a whistle
And I wanted a kite,
I wanted a pocketknife
That shut up tight.
I wanted small boots
And I wanted a kit,
But I didn't want mittens one little bit.

I told them I didn't like mittens,
I told them as plain as plain,
I told them I didn't WANT mittens,
And they've given me mittens again!

MARCHETTE CHUTE

This boy sounds rather spoiled! The poem should be read in a 'pouting' sort of way.

Sunning

Old Dog lay in the summer sun
Much too lazy to rise and run.
He flapped an ear
At a buzzing fly.
He winked a half opened
Sleepy eye.
He scratched himself
On an itching spot,
As he dozed on the porch
Where the sun was hot.
He whimpered a bit
From force of habit
While he lazily dreamed
Of chasing a rabbit.
But Old Dog happily lay in the sun
Much too lazy to rise and run.

JAMES S. TIPPETT

Notice the 's' and 'z' sounds in this poem (summer, sun, lazy, buzzing). Why do you think the poet chose them? Do you like the first two lines repeated at the end? Why?

Who Are You?

"Who are *you*?" asked the cat of the bear.
"I am a child of the wood,
I am strong with rain-shedding hair,
I hunt without fear for my food,
The others behold me and quail."
Said the cat, "You are lacking a tail."

"What can you *do*?" asked the cat.
"I can climb for the honey I crave.
In the fall when I'm merry and fat
I seek out a suitable cave
And sleep till I feel the spring light."
Said the cat, "Can you see in the night?"

Said the cat, "I sit by man's fire,
But I am much wilder than you.
I do the thing I desire
And do nothing I don't want to do.
I am small, but then, what is that?
My spirit is great," said the cat.

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

Compare this with "Witch Cat" on page 306. Pick out a line from each which says the same thing in a different way.

Wild Geese

I heard the wild geese flying
  In the dead of the night,
With beat of wings and crying
I heard the wild geese flying,
And dreams in my heart sighing
  Followed their northward flight.
I heard the wild geese flying
  In the dead of the night.

Elinor Chipp

Here, again, the first two verses are repeated at the end like an echo. Do you think that the poet would like to travel to distant places? Listen for the lines which tell you this.

The Mouse

I heard a mouse
Bitterly complaining
In a crack of moonlight
Aslant on the floor—

"Little I ask
And that little is not granted.
There are few crumbs
In this world any more.

"The bread-box is tin
And I cannot get in.

"The jam's in a jar
My teeth cannot mar.

"The cheese sits by itself
On the pantry shelf—

"All night I run
Searching and seeking,
All night I run
About on the floor.

"Moonlight is there
And a bare place for dancing,
But no little feast
Is spread any more."

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

It is always interesting to look at things from a new angle. This is a "mouse-eye view". What does the mouse think of his life?

The Hippopotamus

In the squdgy river,
  Down the oozely bank,
Where the ripples shiver,
  And the reeds are rank.

Where the purple Kippo
  Makes an awful fuss,
Lives the hip-hip-hippo
    Hippo-pot-a-mus!

Broad his back and steady;
  Broad and flat his nose;
Sharp and keen and ready
  Little eyes are those.

You would think him dreaming
  Where the mud is deep.
It is only seeming—
  He is not asleep.

Better not disturb him,
  There'd be an awful fuss
If you touched the Hippo,
  Hippo-pot-a-mus.

GEORGIA DURSTON

Which words make you think of mud?

Mixed Beasts

The Giraffrican Elephant

He eats the leaves from off the trees
  Because he is so tall.
And as he has a trunk besides
  He's sure to get them all.
Without his trunk where would he be
  When on the river's brink?
He'd find it very difficult
  To get a drop to drink.

The Kangarooster

His tail is remarkably long
And his legs are remarkably strong;
  But the strength and the length of his legs and his tail
Are as naught to the strength of his song.

He picks up his food with his bill;
He bounds over valley and hill;
  But the height of his bounds can't compare with the sounds
He lets out when he crows with a will.

The Bumble Beaver

A cheerful and industrious beast,
He's always humming as he goes
To make mud-houses with his tail
Or gather honey with his nose.

Although he flits from flower to flower,
He's not at all a gay deceiver.
We might take lessons by the hour
From busy, buzzy, Bumblebeaver.

The Herringdove

The gentle, soft-voiced herringdove
Swims in the sea so wide.
Emblem of innocence and love;
It's very nice when dried.

KENYON COX

Humorous or 'nonsense' verse (and prose) is usually much funnier if read with a perfectly serious face. What "Mixed Beasts" can you invent? How would you describe them?

The Camel's Complaint

Canary birds feed on sugar and seed,
  Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And, as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
  Have chicken and cream for their lunch.
    But there's never a question
    About my digestion—
    ANYTHING *does* for me!

Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
  Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
  And oysters can slumber in pails.
    But no one supposes
    A poor Camel dozes—
    ANY PLACE *does* for me!

Lambs are inclosed where it's never exposed,
  Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
  And pigs are protected by pens.
    But a Camel comes handy
    Wherever it's sandy—
    ANYWHERE *does* for me!

People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a camel, he's
Ridden by families—
ANY LOAD *does* for me!

A snake is as round as a hole in the ground,
And weasels are wary and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
Than lizards that live in a creek.
But a Camel's all lumpy
And bumpy and humpy
ANY SHAPE *does* for me!

CHARLES E. CARRYL

Camels are always groaning and complaining, which is probably what gave the poet his idea for this poem. What are his chief complaints? Listen to the poem to find your answer.

Four Famous Limericks

There was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside,
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

COSMO MONKHOUSE

There was a small boy of Quebec
Who was buried in snow to the neck;
When they said, "Are you friz?"
He replied, "Yes, I is—
But we don't call this cold in Quebec."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

As a beauty I'm not a great star,
There are others more handsome by far;
But my face I don't mind it
Because I'm behind it—
'Tis the folks out in front that I jar.

ANTHONY EUWER

A tutor who tooted the flute
Tried to tutor two tutors to toot.
Said the two to the tutor,
"Is it harder to toot or
To tutor two tutors to toot?"

CAROLYN WELLS

An Introduction To Dogs

The dog is man's best friend.
He has a tail on one end.
Up in front he has teeth.
And four legs underneath.

Dogs like to bark.
They like it best after dark.
They not only frighten prowlers away
But also hold the sandman at bay.

A dog that is indoors
To be let out implores.
You let him out and what then?
He wants back in again.

Dogs display reluctance and wrath
If you try to give them a bath.
They bury bones in hideaways
And half the time they trot sideaways.

They cheer up people who are frowning,
And rescue people who are drowning,
They also track mud on beds,
And chew people's clothes to shreds.

Dogs in the country have fun.
They run and run and run.
But in the city this species
Is dragged around on leashes.

Dogs are upright as a steeple
And much more loyal than people.

Ogden Nash

Ogden Nash has a wonderful way of making a simple description sound funny. (See the first stanza.) He also delights in making up words to fit the rhyme. Can you see a made-up word in this poem? What other words can you find in the Poetry Section that are made up?

Poor Old Lady

Poor old lady, she swallowed a fly.
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a spider.
It squirmed and wriggled and turned inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a bird.
How absurd! She swallowed a bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly,
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a cat.
Think of that! She swallowed a cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly,
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a dog.
She went the whole hog when she swallowed the dog.
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly,
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a cow.
I don't know how she swallowed the cow.
She swallowed the cow to catch the dog,
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly,
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Poor old lady, I think she'll die.

Poor old lady, she swallowed a horse.

She died, of course.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

This is probably the original version of the folk rhyme *I Know An Old Lady*, which was set to music and made famous by Mr. Alan Mills, the well-known folk singer.

Be Like The Bird

Be like the bird,
Halting in his flight
On limb too slight
Feels it give beneath him,
Yet sings . . .
Knowing he hath wings.

VICTOR HUGO

This is good advice. Can you explain it?

GOLDEN SPURS

Books are bridges,
Shining, free,
Which link us to
Ourselves-to-be.

No one has to
Go their way—
He who chooses
Still may stay

In his yard or
At his gate
While the shining
Bridges wait.

Who would hunt
With Robin Hood
Deep within
An English wood?

Who would scour
La Mancha's plain
With the doughty
Don of Spain?

Who would ride
A sturdy roan
To the rescue
Of Saint Joan?

Books are bridges,
Cross, and see
The mighty lands
Of chivalry—

Cross, and conquer
Every foe
All your lifetime
Needs to know.

Cross—for heroes.
Left behind
Golden Spurs
For you to find!

VIRGINIA SCOTT MINER

"Who would" in this poem means, "who wishes to". The word "Cross" begins the last two stanzas. Cross what?

Important Books for Children

Grade IV Level

Author	Title	Publisher
Belting, Natalie M.	ELVES AND ELLEFOLK	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
Blough, Glenn O.	THE MONKEY WITH A NOTION	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
Carleton, Barbee Oliver	THE SECRET OF SATURDAY COVE	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
Carlson, N. S.	ALPHONSE THAT BEARDED ONE THE TALKING CAT SASHES RED AND BLUE THE HAPPY ORPHELINE FAMILY UNDER THE BRIDGE	*Longmans, Green and Company*
Carroll, Ruth & Latrobe	TOUGH ENOUGH	*Oxford University Press*
Clark, A. N.	LITTLE NAVAJO BLUEBIRD	*The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited*
Cooke, Donald E.	THE SILVER HORN OF ROBIN HOOD MEN OF SHERWOOD	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
d'Aulaire, Ingrid and Parin, Edgar	CHILDREN OF THE NORTHLIGHTS	*The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited*
De Angeli, M.	PETITE SUZANNE COPPER-TOED BOOTS JARED'S ISLAND	*Doubleday Publishers*
de la Mare, Walter	MR. BUMPS AND HIS MONKEY	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
Dunham, M.	KRISTLI'S TREES	*McClelland and Stewart Limited*
Eager, E.	HALF MAGIC KNIGHT'S CASTLE	*Longmans, Green and Company*
Estes, E.	THE MOFFATS THE MIDDLE MOFFAT RUFUS M. GINGER PYE	*Longmans, Green and Company*
Farjeon, E.	THE GLASS SLIPPER	*Oxford University Press*
Godden, R.	IMPUNITY JANE MOUSE HOUSE THE MOUSEWIFE	*The Macmillan Company of Canada*
Hanaforth, T.	MEI LI	*Doubleday Publishers*
James, W.	YOUNG COWBOY	*Thomas Allen Limited*
Jannes, E.	ELLE KARI	*The Ryerson Press*
Lawson, R.	RABBIT HILL THE TOUGH WINTER	*The Macmillan Company of Canada*
Leaf, M.	WEE GILLIS	*The Macmillan Company of Canada*
Lesser, Milton	SPACEMAN, GO HOME	*Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited*
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Sewell, A.	BLACK BEAUTY	*The House of Grant (Canada) Ltd.*
Wilder, L. I.	LITTLE HOUSE IN THE BIG WOODS	*Musson Book Company Limited*

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